

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

also a question of privilege because the minister suggested I came into the house with some untrue figures. I received those figures from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and, if he likes, I am prepared to give him this information.

**Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, on this matter of ships in the Vancouver harbour, may I ask the minister, in view of the information which I received only yesterday from the harbourmaster of Vancouver to the effect that the number of ships awaiting cargo has now reached such proportions that 16 have had to be anchored in English Bay, and not in the inner harbour, whether for reasons of public relations, he would consult with the Minister of Transport to consider the possibility of foregoing the \$2,500 a day demurrage on ships held there through no fault of their own?

**Mr. Pepin:** Mr. Speaker, I have looked back at the record for former years and I have found that even when the situation was far from being as dramatic as it is now, requests were being made for the payment of demurrage by the Canadian government; so this situation is not new. What I am saying, however, is that short of going there myself and administering the port of Vancouver, and dealing with box car assignments myself, which would be highly undesirable, the government has done everything that needs to be done to ensure that the work is being carried out by the proper authorities, and by people who know about transportation and about port operations. I think that is all the government can be asked to do.

To come back to the point made by the hon. member for Mackenzie, I did not say that he did not tell the truth. I said that the statistics he used were good statistics but that they gave a wrong impression of the facts. It is true that the carloadings are down by 18 per cent, but one must consider how this figure comes about—

**Mr. MacEwan:** Go back to the university and start lecturing there again.

**Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Would he consider doing what has been done before, that is appoint an individual or a controller who would go to Vancouver to co-ordinate the activities there?

**Mr. Pepin:** I have already answered this question five times. The reason I gave for not

[Mr. Korchinski.]

agreeing is that if a single man is appointed to do that job, every group might dump their problems on him.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Pepin:** Instead of appointing one man we have appointed a transportation committee which brings together all the interested parties. A subcommittee has been formed in Vancouver to take care of that particular problem and the members of the subcommittee are the representatives of those who have an interest in and a knowledge of the problems. They are doing their best to get out of a very unhappy and difficult position.

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that some of the ships in Vancouver harbour have been tied up for over a month, and in view of the many other difficulties involved in grain movement and handling over the past several months, will the government give consideration to the appointment of a grain controller to co-ordinate as well as to control and oversee all aspects of the grain situation?

**Mr. Pepin:** It would be desirable that members of a particular party co-ordinate their questions first.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce which I put previously to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the minister or officials of the department concerned considered the possibility and feasibility of diverting trainloads of drying grain to alternate sea ports and simultaneously diverting some of the ships? I am thinking of the ports of Prince Rupert and Seattle. Is the government looking into the feasibility of doing this?

**Mr. Pepin:** The hon. member suggested yesterday that we should use the ports of Seattle and Prince Rupert. I find that transportation costs to Seattle would be altogether in excess of what is acceptable. The dryer at Prince Rupert is being fully utilized at present. Ships will be diverted to Prince Rupert as quantities of dry grain accumulate at that port.