

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[English]

**Mr. Hellyer:** I do not think the two things are directly related. One is an industrial dispute which really comes within the responsibility of my colleague the Minister of Labour at this stage. As to the other, as my hon. friend knows we make every effort to keep the ice out of the river so as to prevent flooding. This enables ships to take advantage of the channel which has been opened up.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question deals with winter navigation.

Can the minister tell us if he intends this year to operate an icebreaker in the Saguenay in order to facilitate winter navigation on that river as far as Chicoutimi?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member is repeating a question asked a few days ago.

[English]

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. In answer to a question I asked him last week he indicated that he was bringing together the longshoremen's association and the Shipping Federation of Canada in the hope some agreement could be reached with regard to the implementation of the Picard report. May I ask the minister if he has been able to effect any agreement between these parties, or if he is planning to resort to appointing an administrator for the port?

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):** I met with the representatives of the shipping federation and the stevedoring companies for some little time on Friday last in Montreal. I had hoped to meet with the representatives of the longshoremen's unions directly concerned, but that meeting did not materialize, through no fault of mine. I was there, ready to meet them. I might say they have since been in communication with the officials of my department and a meeting between the shipping federation and the unions did take place on Monday. I am sorry to say it was not too successful. The situation is tense and at the moment it would be difficult to appoint an administrator agreeable to both sides. I think an arbitrator would be more helpful.

[Translation]

**Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour.

[Mr. Valade.]

Is he aware that large quantities of apples from Quebec orchards intended for the Great Britain market are piling up in the warehouses of Montreal harbour, and would the minister grant a very special attention to that problem, in order that Canadian producers may not incur heavy losses?

[English]

**Mr. Nicholson:** I thank the hon. member for having made these representations, but I would suggest that it might be more helpful if the apple producers directed their representations to the unions concerned and to the shipping federation.

**Mr. Valade:** I want to direct a question to the Minister of Labour following the answer he gave. Can the minister inform us if in his talks with the parties concerned he is going to discuss the security of the longshoremen? I think this is one of the problems, and it would be helpful to discuss that.

**Mr. Nicholson:** I take it that the hon. member is talking about the safety of the longshoremen rather than security. On that score, the collective agreements in force contain a provision dealing with the safety of the workmen. The Picard committee amended the collective agreement. The parties have rights under the agreements that can be enforced through grievance procedures. I think this matter can be safely left to both parties, who are experienced in enforcing their rights under collective agreements.

**CANADA PENSION PLAN****INQUIRY AS TO REFUNDS TO EMPLOYERS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington South):** I have a question for the Minister of National Revenue which concerns the Canada Pension Plan. Is the minister now in a position to make refunds to employers who have contributed large overpayments to the Canada Pension Plan?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board):** Technically, yes; legally, no.

**Mr. Hales:** Has the minister or his department established a formula which could be used to make these refunds?

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated there is no technical problem now in the way. The problem is a legal one. We do not have any authority to do this, and we cannot