

area with feed grains. We are not moving grain out of Montreal or out of Three Rivers, but we are hopeful the grain supply situation will improve—not that there will be a sustained supply but sufficient that there will be no loss of poultry or livestock. We are doing everything possible to make sure that the grain moves.

Mr. Stanfield: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Béchard: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if by accident you have overlooked the tradition of calling on a member of the Social Credit Party in the first round?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I might say I have not done that by accident. It was done because at the moment the NDP member finished questioning no member of the Social Credit Party was standing.

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[Translation]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE IN QUEBEC—INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO SETTLE

Mr. Albert Béchard (Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, to calm the fears of the Leader of the Opposition, may I tell him that this afternoon I take it upon myself to be the spokesman for the Social Credit Party of Canada on this subject. I should have liked to put my supplementary to the Minister of Labour, but in his absence I shall address it to the Prime Minister.

Does the government intend to settle the strike of the longshoremen in the port of Montreal the way it did in the port of Vancouver?

Hon. André Ouellet (Acting Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry but I was not listening when the question was put. Would the hon. member be kind enough to ask it again?

Mr. Béchard: Mr. Speaker, I shall be pleased to do so.

I asked the Minister of Labour, or in his absence, his parliamentary secretary, or the Prime Minister, whether the government intends to take legislative measures identical to those Parliament passed to settle the longshoremen's strike in the port of Vancouver to settle the strike now paralyzing the ports of Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec City?

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, there always comes a time in a strike when the public interest must be weighed against the right to strike. The government and the cabinet are now in the process of looking into this matter. For the time being we have no statement to make, but one thing is sure: the Minister of Labour and the government are watching the situation very closely.

Oral Questions

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for his kindness to us and also to tell the House that we did not elect the member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard) to speak on our behalf. However, when our turn came, I was busy talking with a member on the government's side. So, my question—

An hon. Member: They were talking about patronage!

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): —and we were not talking about patronage, but about management.

In the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, I want to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the unfortunate strike of longshoremen in the ports of Quebec City, Montreal and Trois-Rivières, which worries a lot of people and disturbs our economy, can the Prime Minister assure the House that the negotiations now taking place to settle this strike are conducted with diligence and not only for form's sake, and secondly can the Prime Minister reassure us on the results of these negotiations and tell us that the strike will soon be over?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, of course, I cannot give any guarantee regarding the outcome of the negotiations, but the answer I gave to the excellent question of the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard) indicates rather clearly that the government follows this matter very closely.

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● (1420)

AGRICULTURE

EFFECT OF LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE ON FEED GRAIN SUPPLIES—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Considering that for the past 10 days several members from both sides of the House are rightly concerned about conditions in Quebec, can the minister tell us how long the government is ready to wait to settle this embarrassing matter and can he at last tell when producers will have sufficient supplies?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, many statements have been made concerning the shortage of grain and the loss of poultry livestock, but no evidence has been presented to me or to the provincial minister of agriculture in Quebec to show that this is actually taking place. Grain is moving out of the Quebec elevator. Grain is being moved to the area by ship from the Lakehead and by truck, and we are optimistic because those who are picketing the grain elevators in Montreal are not elevator workers. None of them work in the elevators. We hope, and are optimistic, that an arrangement can be made for the union to withdraw their pickets from that area, because there is an injunction; there is to be peaceful picketing, and truckers refuse to cross the picket lines