

Inquiries of the Ministry

tary secretary. My question is based on a public statement by the Minister of Transport that the government is looking into ways of introducing rapid transit between Windsor and Quebec City. May I ask whether it will be government policy to resist any attempt to further curtail the present rail service in this area until at least a feasible alternative can be provided?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

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[Translation]

LABOUR RELATIONS**QUEBEC—LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE—STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS—MEASURES TO SETTLE DISPUTE**

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour with regard to a question asked yesterday dealing with the situation in the ports of Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec City and to which his colleague answered but not in a satisfactory way.

Considering the national importance of the situation resulting from the dilemma in which the Maritime Employees and Longshoremen's Association in the above-mentioned ports find themselves and which gives rise to a daily loss of \$100,000 for the Canadian economy, can the Minister of Labour tell the House what action he himself and the government intend to take to solve this conflict? Could he also tell the House what the situation is presently between the two parties?

[English]

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the collective agreement that is in dispute with respect to certain clauses itself provides the means for resolving the dispute, that is, the use of the arbitration procedure. Arbitrators are named in the agreement itself. Either or both parties should make use of the arbitration procedure to settle that dispute. At the same time, the senior officers of the department in Montreal have remained in close touch with both parties, urging them to this course or to any other useful negotiations that would bring an end to the dispute.

[Translation]

QUEBEC—LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE—RECOURSE TO ARBITRATION—INTERVENTION BY THE MINISTER

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour; can he say whether, as far as he knows, either party has actually called for arbitration in the present dispute?

[English]

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, neither party has used the arbitration procedure.

[Mr. Danforth.]

[Later:]

[Translation]

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, because of the importance of this question which affects the whole Canadian economy, I should like to ask the Minister of Labour to say honestly to the House whether, before this situation which seems to become more and more tense between both parties involved, he intends to act and propose a settlement for this dispute?

[English]

Mr. O'Connell: We are making every effort available to the Department of Labour to urge the parties to make use of the process which the Labour Code requires and which the collective agreement provides to settle that dispute.

QUEBEC—LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE—SUGGESTED ACTION BY GOVERNMENT UNDER LABOUR CODE

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the present Labour Code commands that the government intervene at this time because, as I understand it, the parties are contravening the law, will the minister step in now and advise the parties that they must come to arbitration?

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, may I say with all due respect to the hon. member that I think he is misinterpreting sections 124 and 125 of the Labour Code. It is the parties themselves that go to arbitration.

QUEBEC—LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE—EFFECT ON GRAIN SHIPMENT

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. It concerns the strike at the St. Lawrence ports and the effect on grain shipment. Since all the hopper cars in the world will not be any good if grain shipments are affected by this kind of strike, I should like to ask the minister how long the government plans to let the situation continue before doing something positive about it?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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GRAIN**OATS—INQUIRY AS TO FINAL PAYMENT FOR 1970-71 CROP YEAR**

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. Is he in a position to advise the House whether a final payment will be made on deliveries of oats for the crop year 1970-71, and could he enlighten the House as to when we might expect an announcement?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, progress is being made toward the closing of this pool. I do not have a specific date when the announcement might be made, but I will get it for the hon. member.