

Mr. Garland: I was just trying to give the minister an opportunity of perhaps adding some more goodies before dissolution.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

RURAL MAIL COURIERS—INQUIRY AS TO INCREASED REMUNERATION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Is the government at the present time giving active consideration to improving the remuneration of rural mail couriers?

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): I think that question would more appropriately be directed to the Postmaster General.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am very happy to do so.

Hon. W. M. Hamilton (Postmaster General): The rural mail couriers for years have tendered their own prices on the contracts for which they were competing, and they set their own salaries. I would think the hon. member would remember that fact from the days when he was sitting in for the then postmaster general, but I guess he did not pay much attention in those days.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

REPORTED STATEMENT BY U.K. PRIME MINISTER ON TEST RESUMPTION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Douglas Jung (Vancouver Centre): If I may, Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Would the Prime Minister care to comment on the statement reported to have been made by Prime Minister Macmillan on the resumption of nuclear tests?

Mr. Hellyer: Did you have another caucus this morning?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): The government of Canada was advised in advance by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the President of the United States that an announcement of this nature would be made today in London and in Washington.

The situation created by the recent series of nuclear tests by the U.S.S.R. has given rise to a searching study of the defences of the western alliance, and has raised the question whether those tests had resulted in the U.S.S.R. strengthening its nuclear capability. It is clear that in examining measures which may be necessary to meet the increasing

Inquiries of the Ministry

Soviet military capability, the government of the United States and the government of the United Kingdom have sought to avoid any action that might intensify the spiralling competition in nuclear armaments.

The failure to reach an agreement in the three power talks regarding the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests is very regrettable. We believe that a supreme effort should now be made to work out a mutually acceptable solution to the problem of bringing under control the mounting stocks of nuclear weapons at the disposal of nations throughout the world.

With this objective in mind the Canadian government welcomes the action taken by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the President of the United States in jointly proposing to Mr. Khrushchev that the forthcoming disarmament conference should be made the occasion for giving a new stimulus to the search for a disarmament agreement, and that the conference due to begin in Geneva on March 14 should be held initially at the level of foreign ministers.

In keeping with the position which the government has consistently taken on disarmament and nuclear testing, the Secretary of State for External Affairs will be available to participate in this renewed attempt to seek practical solutions to the many problems with which the disarmament committee will be faced. As has been re-emphasized today by the simultaneous announcement in these two capital cities, this problem is one of overriding urgency. The task of securing disarmament is of ever increasing importance.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

ST. BONIFACE, MAN.—REPORTED ORDERING OF UNEMPLOYED TO SURVIVAL COURSE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): May I ask the Minister of Labour if he is in a position to say whether he has had any reports on the inquiries made with respect to St. Boniface?

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): I have been thinking over the part of the question in which the hon. member requested me to get information indicating whether it is true that the municipal authorities in Brandon—

Mr. Pickersgill: St. Boniface.

Mr. Starr:—or rather St. Boniface were ordering the unemployed to enrol for survival courses. After thinking over that part of the question, it is my view that the question should be directed to the municipal authorities.