

Inquiries of the Ministry

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should call the attention of the house to the fact that during this session 540 written questions have been asked of which 416 have already been answered. There have been 52 starred questions asked of which 46 have been answered. Having regard to the unanswered questions, particularly those dating back to last May referred to by my hon. friend, many of them will take some weeks yet to answer because of their nature.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to speak on the same point of order. I directed a question to the Prime Minister which was placed on the order paper. It relates to the task force studying labour relations, and simply requests a list of the subjects being studied and the people conducting the studies. This question was placed on the order paper four months ago, and I am wondering whether the Prime Minister will check to find out what the situation is in respect of an answer.

WINTER WORKS**REPORTED REDUCTION IN LENGTH OF PROGRAM**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. E. Pascoe (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Has the government reduced its winter works program to five months from last year's period of six months, and will the program now start on December 1 instead of November 1?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the program may begin either on November 1 or December 1, according to the choice of each province, but the period will be restricted to five months.

[English]

Mr. Pascoe: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Last year the winter works program included brush clearing, which is an important winter farm operation in many parts of Canada. Is brush clearing included in this year's winter works program?

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Speaker, that may very well be included in winter works provided that is related to more important works

in accordance with the winter works program. In other words, we will not accept programs having to do with clearing fields or cleaning sewers, etc., unless they are related to an over-all construction program.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Bow River on a supplementary question.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): This is not quite a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, but it is related to the winter works program because it refers to lay-offs. Did the minister receive a petition from the international brotherhood of railway electrical workers in Calgary protesting the lay-off of 400 men by the C.P.R. due to the tie-up of shipments of grain—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Woolliams: —and will the minister have the manpower office in Calgary look into this matter?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

FARM MACHINERY**REQUEST FOR REPORT ON WORK OF ROYAL COMMISSION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that some months ago the drastic increase in the prices of farm machinery impelled the government to order an investigation, and in view of the fact that the problem is still besetting our farmers, I should like to ask the minister what progress is being made in this connection, how soon he expects a report on the investigation into the prices of farm machinery, and when we may expect the report to be tabled.

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, when the royal commission was set up it indicated that to undertake a comprehensive survey which would be meaningful and useful would take some two years. The work of the royal commission is on schedule, but it has not been able to cut down that period of time.

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. At the time the minister set up the royal commission he asked the farm implement companies to voluntarily accept guide lines regarding price increases. Can the