

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Jerome:** Mr. Speaker, just before the beginning of today's session I spoke to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General (Mr. Hogarth) who will be having some conversation with the hon. member later today about this matter.

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, I think I can assure the hon. gentleman that there will be a government proposal both with respect to wages and job security before the expiry of the current contract.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

## POST OFFICE

## REASON FOR NEGOTIATIONS NOT HAVING COMMENCED WITH UNIONS ON WAGES AND JOB SECURITY—RESPONSE TO UNIONS' PROPOSALS

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the President of the Treasury Board. Arising out of the answer to the hon. member for Edmonton Centre (Mr. Paproski) yesterday that negotiations with the postal unions have not yet reached a point where wages and job security have been discussed, and in view of the intense public concern about strikes in important services of this sort, has the President of the Treasury Board any explanation to give the House why negotiations have not even commenced with regard to wages and job security although the wage contract is to expire on March 27?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. As is traditional in these matters, the representatives of the employees would prefer to take first, in the period of negotiations, the easiest items. In a contract composed of a very considerable number of articles, nearly all of which have been opened by the unions for negotiation, they have started, as is traditional, with the easier ones, leaving the harder ones for later.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the collective agreement expires on March 27, and as I understand that Treasury Board has now received a proposal from the unions with regard to both wages and job security, can the President of the Treasury Board indicate when the government will make a response to these proposals from the unions?

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, I think that rather than try to set a particular date at which a response would be made, I can reassure the hon. gentleman that we will proceed in the most orderly way to deal with the issues as originally agreed.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I wish to ask one further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the track record of the Treasury Board with regard to negotiations in recent times—

**Mr. MacEachen:** It is an excellent one.

**Mr. Stanfield:** —I have to ask the President of the Treasury Board whether he intends to make a response before or after the expiry of the collective agreement or whether he proposes to let things drag on so long that the issues can only be finally settled by a strike?

## PUBLIC SERVICE STAFF RELATIONS ACT

## INQUIRY AS TO AMENDMENTS TO IMPROVE NEGOTIATION PROCEDURES

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a related question to the President of the Treasury Board. In light of the fact that negotiations proceed as set out by the Public Service Staff Relations Act, and that this leaves much to be desired in the sense that there seems to be more confrontation than negotiation during periods of negotiation between the Treasury Board and representatives of the Public Service, is the government seriously considering bringing in amendments to the act in order to improve the procedures and, if so, when can we expect some idea as to its intentions?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I do share most heartily the view of the hon. gentleman that there has developed over the years rather more of a technique of confrontation than real negotiation, and it is our hope to reverse that trend. However, this takes time to do, and I am not sure that merely the introduction of hasty legislation would bring about in a satisfactory way the resolution of this particular problem. This is something which can only be developed by agreement.

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to know that the minister is as concerned as I am about it, but would he answer my question and advise me whether in fact the government is delving into this matter in order that legislation can be brought forward? I think it is high time that the whole act was reviewed in view of the confrontation rather than negotiation that exists—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member has asked a question. The minister may want to reply briefly so we can go on to the next subject.

**Mr. Drury:** As I said a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, we are very much concerned about this and are first endeavouring to discover what is a better arrangement and how best it can be brought about. I am not convinced that legislation in the next month or so would be the answer.

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## REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

## ALLEGED CONFLICT OF INTEREST OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF INDUSTRIAL INCENTIVES ADVISORY BOARD—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. Has he considered the potential conflict of interest involved in the fact that four members of the Industrial Incentives Advisory Board are prominent