

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

of the postal unions to the recent offer of the Treasury Board in the current negotiations. When will the minister be making a statement in the House on these matters in an effort to cast some kindly light on a darkening situation?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (president of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can rise to the poetic heights achieved in the question, but I would say that when casting light will help achieve useful results, it will be cast.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question I shall address to the Acting Prime Minister, or perhaps the President of the Treasury Board would convey my message to him. Will he make a statement on these matters in view of their urgency, as illustrated by the fact that a provincial government has found it necessary to establish its own courier service?

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**HEALTH****INQUIRY AS TO WHEN LEGISLATION ON CIGARETTE ADVERTISING WILL BE PROCEEDED WITH**

**Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey-White Rock):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare that is related to earlier questions in regard to one aspect of the drug problem in Canada and what the government may be intending to do about it. Can the minister indicate when he intends to proceed with the legislation he introduced last year calling for an end to all the disease-promoting cigarette advertising in Canada?

• (1440)

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, this depends entirely on the progress we make in respect of current pending legislation before the House. As the hon. member knows, we already have under consideration not only the old age pension legislation but the legislation affecting family allowances which is pending before the standing committee.

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**INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY**

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question I wished to direct to the Prime Minister but in his absence I shall direct it to the Acting Prime Minister. Can he advise the House whether the Prime Minister has yet screwed up enough courage to call a general election by the end of this week—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Hees:** —or does he still intend to cling to office and continue not to face issues such as unemployment and inflation?

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member's question is entirely out of order, and I think he owes the Chair some respect.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hees:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Hees:** On a point of order—

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

**Mr. Hees:** Quiet, please. If the noisy rabble on your right would not make such a deafening din, Mr. Speaker, we on your left could hear Your Honour when you get to your feet and call for order and obey your instructions.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I will certainly not pursue the matter. The hon. member normally co-operates with the Chair, but when he asks this kind of question I cannot help but notice that he looks the other way.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hees:** There has been a request that I repeat the question because of the noise.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps the hon. member could come back at the time of adjournment.

**Mr. Hees:** Thank you.

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**CONSUMER AFFAIRS****INCREASE IN PRICE OF FOOD—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER HIGHER PROFITS OF CHAIN STORES JUSTIFIED**

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister arising out of the question asked by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway. In view of the fact that Dominion Stores has reported an increase in its profits for 1971 of some 300 per cent over the previous year, with a similar increase for the first quarter of this year, indicating that the increase in the price of food is not necessarily related to the increase in the cost of food, I should like to ask whether the government has any intention of having an investigation made by the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs into the increase in the price of food to determine whether these increases are justified or represent exorbitant profiteering?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, if there is any evidence that these prices have risen because of a lack of competition in the system there is provision for remedy, and of course the minister and the agency responsible would make the necessary investigations. But if it is a question of some businesses being more profitable than others, I think the hon. gentleman would agree that this happens from time to time and that at