

Inquiries of the Ministry

passed authorizing disbursement of the surplus in the Durum wheat account of the Canadian Wheat Board to the Durum producers, which apparently is prevented at present because of a technicality in the Canadian Wheat Board Act?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this is a suggestion which I shall refer to the minister when he returns.

NATIONAL DEFENCE**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON BASE CONSOLIDATION**

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to my good friend, the Minister of National Defence. In his poetic way is he now prepared to give some indication when his report on base consolidation in Canada will be ready? I ask the question in light of the very serious and worsening situation at Fairfy of Canada's plant at Eastern Passage.

Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as everybody knows there is not much left to be done in the way of base consolidation except the final consolidation of the report which will not be possible before the end of April.

Mr. Woolliams: Abolish many more and you won't have a job.

POST OFFICE**LIFTING OF FREEZE ON LETTER CARRIER DELIVERY**

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the Postmaster General in view of his statement to me yesterday. When will the freeze on the extension of letter carrier services across Canada be lifted so that the Postmaster General can supply these services to which communities are ordinarily entitled?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising this matter on behalf of the Postmaster General. I shall be talking to him about it soon.

TRANSPORT**RAISING OF RAILWAY GRADE CROSSING FUND CEILING**

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport [Mr. McIntosh.]

whether he has given consideration to the restrictive ceiling on applications to the railroad grade crossing fund being raised?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the whole matter of the railway grade crossing fund is being examined. The problem is that it would have to be raised from somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$250,000 to \$25 million and we are trying to find some other solution. I have had discussions with the province of Manitoba on this matter, and others will be forthcoming in a few weeks.

Mr. Saltzman: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I wonder when the minister might be in a position to make an announcement as to the changes?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, it may be some time, and by that I mean a matter of a few months, because of the complexity of the problem. Because of the meetings held with the government of Manitoba last Monday, for example, there is a committee representing Manitoba and my department and also the office of the Minister without Portfolio in charge of housing. We are all looking at it in that context. I hope we can speed up the discussions but I do not want to hold out any hopes that it can come within days or weeks.

[Translation]

POLLUTION**LEGISLATION RESPECTING BIODEGRADABILITY OF DETERGENTS**

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Does he intend to introduce in 1970 legislation to compel detergent manufacturers to make biodegradable or non-polluting products that do not contain phosphates?

[English]

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, these products have already been made biodegradable by virtue of voluntary arrangements that were made some time ago with the phosphate manufacturers. Unfortunately, biodegradability has not solved the problem, so it is not the issue. With respect to the measures whereby we enforce the announcement I made this morning, this is under very active consideration and as stated in the announcement, I will be discussing the matter with my provincial counterparts to try to enlist their co-operation.