

*Oral Questions*

to postal workers who are now being suspended because they dared to deliver mail early, namely, family allowance cheques. Were those the minister's instructions? If so, will he now declare them void, because it demonstrates insensitivity toward labourers, workers and carriers in the Post Office?

[Translation]

**Hon. J.-Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, the Postmaster General has never given any instructions as to when a letter must or must not be delivered. It is a matter of internal management, but it is up to the superintendent of each section to decide when the mail must be delivered, especially when the mail consists of letters containing family allowance cheques or old age security pension cheques for which a precise date of delivery is given. We cannot deliver these letters any time we feel like it.

[English]

**Mr. Woolliams:** Mr. Speaker, I will direct my supplementary question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, in light of the callous answer given by the Postmaster General with regard to the suspension of postal carriers and workers. Will the Minister of National Health and Welfare implement in her department a computer which will set out the date on which these cheques will be negotiable? Those who are carrying the mail are serving Canadians. The performance of the Post Office is now in question. Will the minister implement a program which will set out the date when these cheques can be cashed, so that these people will not suffer loss of pay and embarrassment as a result of being suspended?

[Translation]

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why this question is put to me since I have nothing to do with the internal administration of post offices. My department always sees to it that an emergency plan allows for cheques to reach their destination if serious impediments ever occur. But we have nothing to do with what the hon. member is referring to.

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[English]

#### FINANCE

##### REASON FOR LARGE BORROWING ON NEW YORK MARKET

**Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Will the minister explain why he went to the New York market for a \$750 million loan, breaking the long-term tradition of federal government borrowing in Canada? Is he opening the way for heavy borrowings in the coming year in the Canadian bond market?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I explained that we decided to go into the American market in order to raise funds in the United States. One reason was that Canadians are not borrowing as they used to in the American

[Mr. Woolliams.]

market. In addition, this money will be used for reserve purposes.

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[Translation]

#### AGRICULTURE

##### REQUEST SUBSIDIES BE PAID TO QUEBEC MILK PRODUCERS

**Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

Recently the Canadian Dairy Commission sent a letter to milk producers in Quebec stating:

We wish to advise you that payment of the milk subsidy on your January deliveries which was to be mailed out this week will be postponed... or withheld.

Considering that the decision made by the Canadian Dairy Commission is causing enormous difficulties and could jeopardize the existence of a number of milk producers, does the minister intend to instruct the Canadian Dairy Commission to take the necessary steps so that subsidies be paid to milk producers who need them, as the minister knows?

[English]

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** As I said in answer to a question in the House the other day, Mr. Speaker, a problem exists between the two dairy groups in the province of Quebec, the group representing the fluid milk producers, which involves about 30 per cent of the milk production in Quebec, and the group representing the industrial milk producers, which represents about 70 per cent of the producers in Quebec. These two groups of producers held meetings over the weekend involving the provincial organizations, farm organizations and the Canadian Dairy Commission. They did not come to any decision. They have to straighten this out.

The Canadian Dairy Commission is responsible for seeing that the stabilization payments go to those who are entitled to receive them. I understand they are going to hold public hearings. I heard this morning that public hearings would be held on the administration of the milk marketing system for fluid milk within the province of Quebec. I am not sure whether they are going to be successful. I was told that representatives of the fluid milk producers would make legal representation to have an injunction served to stop the public hearings. I think public hearings is a good idea.

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#### NATIONAL SECURITY

##### DISTRIBUTION OF "TOP SECRET" DOCUMENT

**Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice, who is represented through senior officials on both IAC, the Intelligence Advisory Committee, and SAC, the Security Advisory Committee. In view of reports that 58 documents were circulated, entitled "Canadi-