

Inquiries of the Ministry

Montrealers and other Canadians adequate postal services despite the intervention of a good many ministers of the Crown?

Mr. Drury: Perhaps I should only say that even if hon. gentlemen opposite do not have faith in our conciliation machinery, I do.

[*Later:*]

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): I should like to ask the President of the Treasury Board whether he could, without divulging any of the details of the government's position in the current negotiations, tell the House if there is any hope that the government's attitude in regard to the working conditions of postal employees will be somewhat easier than it was a year ago when the minister's insistence on the unilateral imposition of rule changes led to a strike?

Mr. Drury: I think the Postmaster General himself has indicated on a number of occasions that he is interested in improving substantially the working conditions of Post Office employees. Indeed, during the course of this year he has directed considerable efforts to this end and in these efforts he is supported by the government.

MONTREAL POSTAL DISPUTE—FURTHER
DISCUSSIONS WITH UNION

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board, Mr. Speaker. Has the President of the Treasury Board had any recent discussions with representatives of the CNTU with reference to the continuing Montreal troubles, and is he able to point to any amelioration of this serious situation?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I had a meeting a short time ago with the president of the CNTU at which he indicated the intention of the members of the union in question to persist in their stand and asked me whether there was a likelihood of any modification of the position of the government in adopting and implementing the report of Dr. Goldberg. I told him that unless he had some better suggestions than had occurred to me, I did not see any prospect of the government changing its course.

Mr. Baldwin: What else is new?

Mr. Macquarrie: May I ask the right hon. Prime Minister whether, as this is the third week that the Postmaster General has not

[*Mr. Stanfield:*]

been on roster duty, the minister has left the country or, even worse, left the cabinet and, if so, who is his replacement?

[*Later:*]

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Has-tings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister regarding the Post Office. Would he confirm that Mr. Carl Goldenberg is at present warming up on the sidelines and is expected to take the field in a government uniform at any time?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows that he cannot ask the Prime Minister to confirm or deny a rumour.

GRAIN

WHEAT—SUGGESTED WITHDRAWAL OR ALTERATION OF ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): In view of the fact that the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the Wheat Board is absent, I should like to direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the likely fate of operation LIFT, will the minister give an undertaking to the House that he will immediately initiate negotiations with the representatives of bona fide farmers' groups for the purpose of substantially altering or totally abandoning the program?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I cannot agree with the premise upon which that question is based and therefore I cannot reply.

Mr. Rowland: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister then give an undertaking to the House that he will rapidly develop a program of assistance for areas like Manitoba's Interlake region for which operation LIFT has absolutely no application?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, there already are a number of federal programs particularly applicable to that region. However, they are not administered by this department. So far as operation LIFT is concerned and the complexities of dealing with such a program, again I cannot agree that there are no provisions that will enhance the situation for grain producers in that area if operation LIFT is, in fact, successful.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): A supplementary question Mr. Speaker. Would the minister not at least take this under advisement with his department, having in mind