

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 28, 1970

Mr. Trudeau: Yes.

The House met at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

HOUSE OF COMMONS

HOURS OF SITTING, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 1970

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, hon. members will have noticed the motion in my name on page 7 of today's Order Paper. There have been certain discussions among representatives of the parties along the line that it would assist in planning Thursday's business if that motion could be dealt with by the House now. Could there be agreement to bring the motion forward at this time and, if the House is agreeable, make it an order of the House?

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the few motions in the name of the hon. gentleman that we can say we agree with.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, we are unanimous.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale) moved:

That on Thursday, April 30, 1970, immediately after the disposition of the Oral Question Period, the House shall stand adjourned until 11.00 o'clock a.m., Friday, May 1, 1970.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

POST OFFICE

POSSIBLE NATIONAL STRIKE BY LETTER CARRIERS AND INSIDE WORKERS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Acting Postmaster General. Am I correct in assuming that is the President of the Treasury Board?

Mr. Stanfield: In view of the apparent or at least reported failure of the Post Office to come to terms with both the letter carriers and the inside workers on a new contract to replace the one that expired on September 30, can the minister state briefly to the House what positive steps he is now taking to avoid a national postal strike which is reported to be imminent? I ask this question at this time in view of the great concern that has surrounded and continues to surround the operations of the Post Office.

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I share the concern of the Leader of the Opposition in the difficult negotiations we are having with the Council of Postal Unions. I think he is probably aware that these negotiations have passed from the direct bargaining stage to the appointment and the functioning of a conciliation board to endeavour to find a solution to the dispute. The conciliation board is now at work and is expected to report shortly. Until such time as it does render its report, I think it would be inadvisable for me to make any comments.

Mr. Stanfield: It is also reported that the minister responsible for the Post Office has refused to renew the working conditions that were incorporated in the last agreement. Is it correct that the Postmaster General or his officials are denying the postal workers assurances with regard to the working conditions that were incorporated in the last agreement?

Mr. Drury: As I indicated, representations by both sides to the dispute are being made to the conciliation board, and I do not think it would be helpful to analyse publicly the respective positions being taken before the board.

Mr. Stanfield: I have one further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I think the time has gone by, if I may suggest, when the country can merely be given bland assurances about what may happen to the postal service, and I wish to ask whether the minister can assure the House that this matter will not be treated with the same sort of approach that resulted in a serious strike in 1968 and a postal tie-up in Montreal which still denies