

Oral Questions

may I ask the Prime Minister whether the government, as an employer in this instance, will not stand by its original offer to the postal workers?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as an employer we will, of course, stand by the original offer, but under the law that has been adopted by this House and which I hope will be proclaimed very soon by this parliament we also have a mandate to speak, not only as an employer, but in terms of the total national interest, and we will not shirk either of those duties.

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED BY
CHAIRMAN CONCERNING HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Having it both ways is certainly Liberalism in action—

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Broadbent: May I direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Since the origin of this dispute can be pinned to the communiqué—

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Ask your question.

Mr. Broadbent: Will you shut up.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby will realize that on more than one occasion in the past I have invited the co-operation of the House in respect of preambles to questions. On one occasion, I specifically indicated that not only should preambles to principal questions be short but, particularly in the case of supplementary questions, ought to be avoided altogether or, if used at all, restricted to only one line. The hon. member has today used a rather extensive preamble to his first two questions and he is now in the process of using another to his third question. I wonder whether he would just put his supplementary question.

Mr. Broadbent: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I had just got about seven words out—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Broadbent: Since the communiqué issued by Mr. Pepin on November 7 with reference to maintaining the historical relationship specifically was contrary to the white paper which stated that once a decision is made about the historical relationship a settlement should be reached that would maintain the relationship, and the Board ruled that out, I should like to ask the minister if it is the government's view that the communiqué issued by Mr. Pepin contradicts the spirit of the law and the legislation as introduced by the government?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Just to reply briefly to the hon. gentleman—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Broadbent.]

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):—it would seem his observation or his question is in the nature of a representation, and I will consider it in the preparation—

Mr. Broadbent: Forget it.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):—of the regulations.

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[Translation]

BILINGUALISM

THE DEADLINE FOR GRANTING BILINGUALISM BONUS—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the President of the Treasury Board, I put my question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

It seems that during the month of August this year, the Treasury Board and the bilingualism committee in Montreal jointly set December 31, 1975, as the deadline with regard to the granting of the bilingualism bonus. As the government has not yet taken a final decision and there is a risk the civil servants concerned in Montreal and elsewhere in Quebec will stop giving service in the English language, as indicated in a telegram I received today, could the Prime Minister say how the discussions of the government are progressing in that regard?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I shall be pleased to inquire, Mr. Speaker. I see the President of the Treasury Board is back in the House. He might be prepared to reply, otherwise he will take the question as notice and answer it tomorrow.

Mr. Beaudoin: I see he has arrived, thank you. Last August the Treasury Board and the bilingualism committee in Montreal chose December 31, 1975, as the deadline of the schedule for the implementation of the bilingualism bonus. Since the government has not taken a final decision on this question as yet, as indicated in the telegram I received this morning, could the minister tell the House at what stage discussions stand on that matter now and what the government intends to do?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board): If I understand correctly, Mr. Speaker, we have not been able to reach a decision on that matter because my officials and the unions representing the employees who raised the question last spring are now discussing it.

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AIR TRANSPORT

USE OF FRENCH BY PILOTS AND CONTROLLERS

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the leader of the government.

Considering that one of the corner stones of the policy of the leader of the government is the equality between both official languages and that the Commissioner of Official Languages states in his fourth report for the year 1973-1974 that Canadian administration of air transport should as