

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[Translation]

**Mr. Foresi:** Mr. Speaker, would you kindly call notice of motion No. 69?

I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining notices of motions be allowed to stand.

[English]

## EXCHANGE OF TELEGRAMS BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND PREMIERS

Motion No. 69—**Mr. Coates:**

That an humble Address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this House a copy of the telegrams received by the Prime Minister from the Premiers of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, on February 3, 1969, and a copy of the replies forwarded to the Premiers by the Prime Minister.

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council):** I am informed that the documents requested in this notice of motion were tabled by the Prime Minister on February 7 as recorded at page 5263 of *Hansard*. Perhaps in the circumstances it might be agreed that the motion be withdrawn.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member is not in his seat at the moment. Is it agreed that the motion be withdrawn?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

## POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

## INQUIRY AS TO INITIATIVE TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE GRIEVANCES

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister in the absence of the Postmaster General, who I do not expect to be in the house today. In view of the fact that a strike vote is taking place among members of the Letter Carriers Union in Montreal today, with the possibility of paralysis of the mail service spreading tomorrow, may I ask the Prime Minister whether the government is taking any special measures, or placing itself in a position to explain what new initiatives might be considered, or are being considered, with a view to heading off a situation which may very well result in serious difficulties for the people of the area concerned?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I can only repeat what the Postmaster General said in the house yesterday, that both parties, that is, the Post Office and the union,

[Mr. Burton.]

have agreed to refer all outstanding issues to arbitration and that both sides have facilitated the waiver of delay, so that these questions can go to adjudication as soon as possible. The Public Service Staff Relations Board will appoint an adjudicator as soon as possible, and this is the only fair and legal way we see of solving these difficulties.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker, if my question is not exactly au fait; I was not able to be in the house for very long yesterday. Is it correct that all grievances are being referred to arbitration by agreement, or is it simply the issue of paid travelling time for washing up? There are other grievances which are potentially explosive, such as the difficulty of walk evaluation and the maximum number of hours over which the working day is spread. Is the Prime Minister assuring me that all these matters are now being referred to arbitration by agreement between the Postmaster General and the unions concerned?

**Mr. Trudeau:** The agreement was to refer the outstanding issues, including of course the special one about the lunch arrangements. But the term "outstanding issues" is not restricted, and it would, I suppose include all the issues which are raised by either side.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Can the Prime Minister assure the house that agreement has been reached with regard to referring all these issues, so that all the difficulties can be dealt with, and the people of Canada assured that everything is being done by agreement to avoid a stoppage in this essential service?

**Mr. Trudeau:** In the collective agreement there is contained a grievance procedure. We cannot, obviously, make grievances on behalf of the unions. But they have raised certain grievances and these are the issues to which the Postmaster General has referred as being outstanding issues. We are in this sense the passive party; we are the object of grievances, and we shall see what is referred by the unions. But of course I cannot make any guarantee on their behalf.

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** In view of the fact that one of the major points of contention is the issue of the straight-through walks, and in view of the fact that the Postmaster General is taking the position that management has a right to implement this new arrangement, will the Prime Minister urge the Postmaster General to permit the submission of this question to arbitration,