

*Oral Questions*

the House and the people what he anticipates will be the real rate of growth in Canada in the current year, a figure he gave in each of his four budgets for each year but not in his June 23 effort?

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** If the hon. gentleman would read the budget speech carefully he would find that I estimated the rate of growth at somewhere between zero and one per cent.

**Mr. Stevens:** In view of the apparent indecision so far as the minister is concerned, I would direct a further supplementary question to him. Is it the intention of the minister to continue in his present portfolio and face the result of his economic policies this time next year?

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**PUBLIC SERVICE**

REQUEST FOR PRIME MINISTER'S VIEW OF WHAT  
CONSTITUTES POLITICAL CRITICISM BY TRADE UNION  
REPRESENTATIVE

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and it arises out of a question I put to him yesterday concerning the suspension of a civil servant by the name of Mr. Arthur Stewart. The Prime Minister at that time said he knew nothing about the details of the case, but went on with a process of reasoning that some might well regard as being tortuous unless they were trained as Jesuits. He went on to conclude, as recorded at page 7619 of *Hansard*;

... I agree with the stand he has taken—

“he” being the Minister of Supply and Services  
—That it is not proper for civil servants to criticize and make political statements against the government.

Considering that the article in question, which led to the suspension of Mr. Stewart was essentially criticism of the administration concerning the failure on the one hand of the minister to meet trade union officials, and second—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I allow the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby the leniency to which he is entitled as leader of a party in making a preamble to his question, but I wonder if he would get to his question.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1420)

**Mr. Broadbent:** I would like to ask the Prime Minister if it is his view, and the view of the government, that such criticism by a trade union official constitutes political criticism. If so, what would the Prime Minister say is non-political criticism coming from a trade union representative?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I regret the slur on the Jesuits which the Leader of the New Democratic Party has just made, in view of the fact that they are not here to defend themselves.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Mr. Stevens.]

**Mr. Trudeau:** If the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond were of another order I am sure he would be up on a point of privilege.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trudeau:** The hon. member is asking me a question about the details of the case. I told him yesterday that I had not examined it. I discussed it very briefly with the minister in the House yesterday. I suggest that the question be addressed to the Minister of Supply and Services. He is certainly more able than I to answer on the particulars of the case. The principle is still the same as it was yesterday—and I would hope that a former professor of political science would support it—that it is not necessarily the job of public servants to enter into politics against the government.

**Mr. Broadbent:** It is my intention to have the difference between political criticism and non-political criticism clarified. My question follows upon the Prime Minister's very general statement on this subject yesterday which pertained to all civil servants. In all seriousness, would the Prime Minister clarify for the House what the general view of the government is as to what constitutes political criticism by a trade union official as opposed to what does not?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Mark a C minus on that, please.

DIFFERENCE OF TREATMENT BETWEEN EMPLOYEES  
ALLEGEDLY GUILTY OF POLITICAL CRITICISM

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Even a Jesuit would not have remained silent on that. In his last answer in the House yesterday, the Prime Minister made reference to an Admiral in the defence forces in Canada. He objected to political criticism coming from that source, with which I am in agreement, but I would like to ask him if he considers it just to suspend an ordinary civil servant for what he regards as political criticism, such suspension resulting in the loss of three months pay, but simply to reprimand an Admiral in the navy.

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[Translation]

**COMMUNICATIONS**

CABLEVISION—MEASURES TO PROTECT CONSUMERS—  
MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Communications.

Since the conference of communications ministers ended yesterday in a stalemate, could the minister assure the House that public interest will be protected, that it will not fall into the hands of the private sector, of people who have no say in that debate? And could he also assure the House that acceptable provisions will be submitted again so as to reopen the case and not indefinitely deprive people in and around Rimouski of an adequate cable service?