

APPENDIX

LETTER RESPECTING MONTREAL MAIL
TRANSPORTATION SITUATION

February 17, 1970.

This is a copy of the letter given today by Mr. Kierans to Mr. Raymond Parent, secretary general of the Confederation of National Trade Unions, on the mail transportation situation in Montreal.

February 17, 1970.

Mr. Raymond Parent,
Secretary-General,
Confederation of National Trade Unions,
Montreal, P.Q.

Dear Mr. Parent:

Since the mail transportation situation in Montreal has become intolerable, I wish to state clearly the position of the Post Office and the Government.

Last September, the Government decided to implement fully the policy of inviting tenders for all contracts of mail transportation services exceeding \$1,000 per annum. This is required by section 22 of the Post Office Act.

Among the regions affected is Metropolitan Montreal where temporary arrangements have been renewed each year since 1954. Whatever justification may have been offered for such a policy in the past, it has not worked and is not working. The drivers and contractors alike were faced annually with the dreadful insecurity of losing jobs and contracts. Nor has it benefited the people of Montreal who have suffered through no fewer than 5 conflicts in the last three years, of which only the first was legal.

The resulting disruption, violence, and intimidation have hampered enormously the competitive capacity of industry and commerce in Montreal. It has also provided the people of Montreal with the worst service and the greatest frustrations of any city in Canada.

Nor has the Canadian taxpayer benefited, for he has financed the highest cost transportation services of any major city in the country. The waste and inefficiency can be measured by the combined totals of the new

contracts which amount to \$3,350,000 or about two million less than this year's costs. I am not blaming anyone, neither management, union, or government. I am simply stating the facts.

The situation, obviously, could not continue and my immediate predecessor, Honourable Jean-Pierre Côté, started to implement changes that have now led to the division of Montreal into five sectors. The government decision of last September confirmed that policy.

The new 5 year contracts allow the Post Office more flexibility and provide the drivers with greater job security.

Last year, during the 32 day slowdown, Rod Service Ltd. decided that it could no longer provide the service which the people of Montreal had a right to expect. The members of the union, therefore, lost their employer. Again this year, G. Lapalme Inc., the new contractor and employer, is finding that he cannot provide adequate service. Under these conditions, the contracts can be cancelled and, once again, your members will be without an employer and a contract. Unless the mail service returns to normal immediately, we will have no choice but to revoke the Lapalme contract. The public interest, in particular that of the people of Montreal, would demand such action.

I will not list the incidents of violence, sabotage, and destruction of government property which have occurred during the last two weeks. You are as aware of them as I am. I will simply say that the mail is not being delivered.

If I am forced to cancel the Lapalme contracts, the Post Office will immediately request from Canada Manpower the names of approximately 350 drivers needed to deliver the mails until March 31. If the present employees list their names with Canada Manpower, and if they are permitted by their former union to work, we will give particular attention to those with seniority and experience for this temporary period. If they do not register, the Post Office will take drivers from Manpower's present pool.

A separate crown corporation solely for Montreal drivers is not feasible. Nor is the appointment of a Post Office administrator to supervise the Montreal operation. The Post