

WILLINGNESS OF POSTMASTER GENERAL TO RESUME  
NEGOTIATIONS WITH STRIKING WORKERS

**Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris):** I have a supplementary question for the Postmaster General, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister indicated his willingness to resume negotiations as he indicated in the House yesterday? If he has given that indication to the postal union what has been their response?

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for so many helpers and volunteers after ten months of continuous bargaining.

**An hon. Member:** You need all the help you can get.

**Mr. Mackasey:** It is very helpful to know I have the support of so many members. I made it clear yesterday—I think we should make it very clear that we did not issue an ultimatum. We did not—

**An hon. Member:** What do you call it?

**An hon. Member:** Come on, Bryce.

**Mr. Mackasey:** We did not break off talks. We simply made it very clear that when the union felt that our wage package and terms were satisfactory—we felt the talks had been going so well we should get up to that level immediately and not wait days to get up to that level—we were prepared to sit down and start negotiating other outstanding items that have monetary implications as well. We simply suggested that rather than have four or five meetings, as we did on Sunday, the union take the time and come back when they arrive at that conclusion. The union broke off talks at eight o'clock Sunday night in order to find out if this package was acceptable or not. We are still waiting for their reply. Talks have broken off only in the opinion of members opposite.

I might make another point—

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

**An hon. Member:** Oh, come on!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. If I am going to restrict members of the opposition in making arguments I should do the same in respect of the government.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Postmaster General would answer the specific question because I think it is vitally important to the success of the government's program. It is my information that the union wants to get back to the bargaining table. Have they been invited back to the bargaining table and if so, what has been their response?

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I have said—

**An hon. Member:** Don't do that.

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

**An hon. Member:** Answer the question.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Mackasey:** We never broke off negotiations. I am surprised that the opposition takes the matter so frivolously that they do not want an answer.

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

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

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the hon. member, for whom I have great respect, that he be careful of his sources of information. If we acted on his advice, if we are to de-escalate the public debate, it would be made much easier if questions did not tend to create that public debate and—

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

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[*Translation*]

**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

ELIGIBILITY OF PERSONS RETIRING AT AGE 65 TO FURTHER  
BENEFITS

● (1440)

**Mr. Jacques Lavoie (Hochelaga):** Mr. Speaker, before asking my very first question in the House, may I assure you as well as all my colleagues from both sides of the House, of my full co-operation.

I should like to put my question to the right hon. Prime Minister to whom I respectfully convey the salutations of Montreal-Hochelaga. Can the Prime Minister, who in his message to the nation the day before October 14 expressed concern for senior citizens within his anti-inflation program and a just society philosophy, assure the House that his government will amend Bill C-69 so as to guarantee Canadians 65 years old or more that as in the past, they will be entitled to full payment when they leave a job?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his promised co-operation. I am sure that if he shows much perseverance, he will continue to ask questions in the interest of his Hochelaga constituents rather than partisanship. Although this is an approach which requires great courage, I am sure he will not spare his efforts. The hon. member is certainly aware that the government has increased the pensions paid to the aged. Indeed we apply the escalation provision to the Old Age Security pensions, so that these pensions are geared to the cost of living index. There is no limit to this escalation. Therefore, it is not so much at this time a question of deciding how we can help them more. We are concerned now with a program which will hopefully put an end to inflation, and it is the purpose of the bill before the House. The hon. member certainly understands that it is not in the interest of this war which we all together want to wage against inflation to include in this bill other objectives, however desirable they may be, which might delay its adoption.