

POST OFFICE

ALLEGED GOVERNMENT MISHANDLING OF
MONTREAL POSTAL DISPUTE

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave, seconded by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent), to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the government's mishandling of the Montreal postal situation and the need for Parliament to consider alternative courses of action.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands has given notice pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 26 of his intention to request leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing the Montreal postal situation. I am sure the hon. member and all hon. members would agree that the comments I have just made in relation to the motion proposed by the hon. member for Peace River might, to some extent at least, be applicable to the situation raised by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands. However, there are additional considerations which should be referred to at this time.

• (2:40 p.m.)

In deciding whether or not leave should be granted, the Chair must take into consideration also the limitations placed on that procedure by the terms of Standing Order 26. Hon. members may recall that as long ago as February 18 last the hon. member for Peace River requested and was granted leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing the crippled mail service in Montreal. It seems to me the proposal now being submitted by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands is in essence the same continuing question. In this regard subsection (d) of section 16 of Standing Order 26 reads as follows:

the motion must not revive discussion on a matter which has been discussed in the same session pursuant to the provisions of this Standing Order;

In other words, it has long been established that there can be only one emergency debate during the course of a session on one subject. I realize full well that because there has been debate on a general subject it is difficult to determine whether or not there are different aspects of the question which might not militate in favour of having a second debate

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which would not be precisely on the same terms as the one previously. But I would think the circumstances would be very rare in which the Chair should place itself and the House in the position of having a second emergency debate and a second discussion of a situation which essentially has been considered by the House under the terms of Standing Order 26.

The decision has caused me some difficulty and some anguish, but in view of the rather specific provisions of subsection (d) of section 16 of Standing Order 26 I think the motion cannot and should not be put at this time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

POST OFFICE

MONTREAL POSTAL DISPUTE—POSITION OF
FORMER LAPALME EMPLOYEES

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour, who I believe is in cool waters, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister regarding the Montreal postal troubles. Can the Prime Minister advise if the government has made any further changes of policy so as to do more toward protecting the employment rights of the G. H. Lapalme workers who formerly carried the mail?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the position of the government remains the same. The Goldenberg report is accepted and is being and will be implemented by the government. There are of course, matters which have been discussed between the leaders of the CNTU and the President of the Treasury Board regarding the ways in which it should be implemented, but the fundamental position of the government remains the same.

Mr. Macquarrie: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is it the view of the Prime Minister and the government that these steps meet what Commissioner Goldenberg called the government's moral obligation to seek to protect the employment of these men?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As has been made known to the public, the position of the government is that in so far as a number of men would be required to continue the service of delivery of mail by truck these men would be given preference in respect of being hired by the public service for the pur-