

Inquiries of the Ministry

the Minister of Transport. On Wednesday of last week I asked him if he would look into the matter of the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg bringing in outside personnel to maintain operations in the face of a legal and legitimate strike. Has the minister been able to do so and has he been able to do anything to put a stop to this practice?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker, I have not been able to do anything to put a stop to the practice. I have brought the reports to the attention of the CNR which operates the hotel and this seems to me as much as I would be able to do under the circumstances.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister discussed this matter with his colleague, the Minister of Labour, who has a labour code which calls for fair labour practices?

[Translation]

POST OFFICE**MONTREAL—MEASURES TO SETTLE
POSTAL DISPUTE**

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Postmaster General and Minister of Communications.

When will the minister be in a position to advise the House that he has found a way to settle the present postal dispute in Montreal and what steps does his Department intend to take to settle this dispute?

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker I would advise the hon. member to read carefully the letter I just tabled. He will then be better informed and learn about the measures I intend to implement.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Can the minister tell the House if his department intends to transfer the postal distribution centre from Montreal to Toronto as a step conducive to the settlement of this dispute?

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, I never said that and nobody can ascribe such an intention to me. I merely said that temporarily, the mail sent from one part of the country to another would not be routed through Montreal.

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to know whether the minister, after his meeting this morning with union representatives, was given the assurance that the agitation will cease in Montreal and that regular mail deliveries will be resumed. If not, can the minister tell us what contingency action he intends to take, such as the steps he mentioned yesterday were to be taken today in order to bring about normal mail delivery in Montreal?

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, I told the two CNTU representatives this morning that I certainly intend to apply the legislation as adopted by the House.

The law requires that I call for tenders and that is what I did. We have adjudicated contracts to five new contractors. The agreements are signed and we are bound by them. Therefore, we only have to decide what we can do for those who will not be hired by the new contractors.

There are some steps we can take with the assistance and support of my colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen). At this stage, may I say that Mr. Grenier, assistant deputy minister of Manpower and Immigration was present at this morning's meeting. At the end of the meeting, all were aware of our position and I told them I was at their disposal whenever they wanted.

Mr. Asselin: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Did the union accept the minister's position and will they advise the workers to resume mail delivery in Montreal?

If they rejected it, does the minister intend to take strict measures to ensure the mail delivery?

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, the representatives of the CNTU have asked the minister to guarantee the statute of their union. I simply told them: Your statute is spelled out in the contract which binds you to your employers. You have already lost one, that is Rod Service Limited, and you are in the process of losing another. That is your business.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the minister in the midst of his flight of oratory, but I think this is more a debate than a series of questions and answers.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

When the Postmaster General and Minister of Communications says that the present strike in Montreal which paralyses the postal