

*Oral Questions*LES TERRASSES DE LA CHAUDIÈRE PROJECT, HULL, QUEBEC—
METHOD OF CALLING FOR TENDERS

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister having to do with this matter. As well, it deals with statements which were made outside the House by the Minister of Public Works some time ago expressing misgivings about how this project went forward without tender and without the usual competitive aspect which should prevail. The Minister of Public Works said publicly that if he had been in charge, that kind of thing would not have occurred.

Given that set of circumstances, the fact that this project, which was worth, initially, \$160 million, will eventually cost the Canadian public \$600 million, and in view of the allegations which have been made by Mr. Fullerton—who is not known for an idle tongue—would the Prime Minister inform us whether he has had this matter under investigation? Can he assure the House that projects of this proportion are not cleared politically with certain ministers?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the series of allegations made by the hon. member in his question are not all according to the facts. I am sure he would want to have some of his impressions corrected. The Minister of Public Works was in the House yesterday. He will be in the House next week. I will take notice of these questions, and I am sure he will be able to satisfy the hon. member on every aspect.

In so far as allegations are concerned based on what Mr. Fullerton said, I refer the hon. member to a denial made by Senator Marchand in the Senate who has been very incorrectly quoted by Mr. Fullerton. This shows the extent of Mr. Fullerton's ignorance or his lack of memory in this particular matter.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister had read the report correctly, he would find that Senator Marchand referred to the breaking of the height by-law by Place de Ville in the city of Ottawa. The series of questions which I am directing to him has nothing to do with that: my questions concern Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, which is the matter I am interested in today. We can explore the other aspect next week.

Relating to Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, has the Prime Minister had this matter under investigation? Can he assure the House that projects of this proportion and magnitude are not cleared politically; that this one was not cleared politically and that others are not cleared politically with certain ministers? Can he give us that assurance?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the confusion is not in my mind; it is in the mind of the hon. member. I just indicated that in his questions concerning Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, he was quoting as his authority no less a person than Mr. Fullerton whom I indicated was proven wrong in his other allegations.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Make sure your minister is in the House on Monday.

Mr. Trudeau: Make sure your leader is here.

[Mr. Speaker.]

POST OFFICE

NEGOTIATIONS WITH UNION TO AVOID STRIKE

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that this country is faced with a very real threat of another postal strike, that a lot of tension and the threat arises from the fact that the Post Office Department has put before CUPW and the conciliator the possibility of reopening very sensitive areas of the contract, namely, the technological change clause, casual work and the contracting-out of work, and the seriousness of the situation, is the Prime Minister prepared to intervene and withdraw those proposals which are being put forward now by the Post Office Department over a year after negotiations for a new contract were commenced?

• (1117)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is making a representation on behalf of the union. I will make sure the minister is informed of it.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I am not making a representation on behalf of the union; I am making a representation on behalf of the 23 million shareholders of the Post Office Department. Can the Prime Minister give an assurance to this House, instead of participating with the Postmaster General in trying to provoke a strike?

Will the Prime Minister take his responsibility as leader of the government and of this country, remove these clauses and let the Post Office, Treasury Board and the union get on with negotiating a proper contract, instead of dragging in all these red-herrings to force a strike on the Canadian people?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member seems to be the one who is excited and is drawing in red-herrings. He talks about a strike. We know of no imminent strike in the Post Office. Perhaps the hon. member could save his excitement until a little later; the minister will be back very soon.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this member, myself, is not the one who is provoking a strike, but it is the Postmaster General himself, who is reported in the press as having said that it looks like we are heading on the path of a strike, and in view of the fact that this could be extremely serious to the taxpayers of this country—those who use the postal services, including the aged and small businesses—is the Prime Minister prepared to take action now, and not after the fact? Will he please have the Postmaster General withdraw this controversial proposal at this twelfth hour?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, all I am pointing out is that if the hon. member is talking about a strike and alleging this has something to do, perhaps, with a strike in the autumn, if he will keep his cool until Monday, the minister will be happy to answer.