

Post Office

mark because the commission has already set \$3 or \$3.50 an hour—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member knows that is not a point of order.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member for Winnipeg North or South or East wishes to make a speech, I will yield to him because I have always been very happy to take the last slot in any session. This year we have not been able to bargain for anything for ourselves, so perhaps we should put in a word for the postal workers. I listened to the comments of the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) and of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) today. As I listened to these gentlemen, I realized how the employees probably feel. The arguments these gentlemen used would seem to be directly limited to their personal experience in the political arena. Their ability to negotiate leaves a great deal to be desired. It would seem that when the government passed legislation that would allow certain civil servants to negotiate in the normal procedure, it really did not believe they should have this right. It would seem also that most of the people who supported that legislation were of the opinion that the civil servant should not have the right to go on strike, that this is a terrible thing and that such a right should be curtailed and kept within certain limits.

I suggest that if negotiations are to be conducted, they must be conducted outside this sphere. The government is not impartial in its negotiations with its employees. In this case they bring in a guideline and in another case it will be something else. In my opinion, the government does not negotiate in good faith. While speaking to one of my friends in the CLC, it came to my attention that if the proposals suggested for the Post Office workers were implemented, the Post Office workers would in fact receive very little. The example was used of a postal worker earning \$6,718 a year. If he received 6 per cent, and not the 5 per cent the government is talking about, this would give him an increase of \$403.08. Looking at the tax structure of last year, and applying it to his total salary, this would cost him an additional \$114, so he would be left with \$289.08.

● (7:00 p.m.)

The cost of living over the last four or five years has averaged slightly less than 5 per cent. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics fig-

ures indicate it will be 4.9 per cent this year. When deducted from the increase, this would amount to \$287.82. The hours of work have been cut from six days to five days, and the workload has not been decreased. We are offering these employees \$1.26 spread over the next 52 weeks. If anybody thinks that is generous, I wonder who they are. I suggest that this government is not negotiating in good faith and that it never has negotiated in good faith. This government has no interest in organized labour.

Today we have tabled under your name, Mr. Speaker, a document showing the wage increases for a whole list of employees of the House of Commons. It was presented by the Commissioners of Internal Economy. It is called the "Revised list of pay for employees of the House of Commons whose positions are classified hereunder". They received 5 per cent, with no union and no bargaining at all. The government decided, out of the goodness of its heart, that the least it could do was pay them 5 per cent more or it would lose some of these people. Now we talk about negotiations. That is b.s., Mr. Speaker! These are not negotiations. The government is not offering to this union any more than it gave its employees, who are not organized. The government does not believe in negotiations.

An hon. Member: But that is reasonable.

Mr. Peters: Somebody says that is reasonable. I have seen company unions that were reasonable, and if you stayed long enough they even took your shirt. I would not blame this union for taking pretty strong action against the government. Some of the responsibility then becomes my responsibility because I am a representative of the people, as are the rest of my 263 colleagues.

I suggest that we should not accept the statement made by the President of the Treasury Board this afternoon that his offer to the union is reasonable. It is not reasonable. It is the kind of thing one gives to somebody without their even asking for it. I always thought it was a good thing to give my kids 25 cents. When they became a little older and started negotiating, it was not 25 cents or \$1 for which they asked. It used to shock me, but they asked for \$5. They said they needed it to take the girl friend to a show, to buy her a coke afterwards and to buy gas with which drive the car. They had to have the money to cover that. So it was not the 25 cents which I thought was reason-