

Time Allocation

NDP does not want to legislate them back to work. The NDP will be the negotiators for the union and make the negotiations fly. I suggest to the House that a union leader would have serious reservations about hiring any one of those New Democrats to negotiate.

• (1630)

One must question where the NDP stands. They expressed concern for a woman who may be losing a job. No woman is losing her job at the Post Office. They know that the new system of franchising would be established only upon retirement. How does that put a woman out of work?

My hon. colleague noted that in fact the new franchising system may create even more jobs. What is wrong with that? What have you got against more jobs?

Mr. Rodriguez: Four dollars an hour.

Mr. Holtmann: The fee has never been mentioned or negotiated. The parties were unable to come to a conclusion after 15 months of negotiation, yet the NDP wants to extend these negotiations and the strike. It wants to create more damage and injury to the economy of Canada.

Mr. Rodriguez: Like free trade.

Mr. Holtmann: How do they expect that to be creative?

Mr. Rodriguez: You do not believe in collective bargaining.

Mr. Holtmann: Certainly we believe in collective bargaining, but obviously in 15 months it has not produced a collective answer.

Mr. Rodriguez: The right to strike is part of collective bargaining.

Mr. Holtmann: The NDP takes the attitude that it will only support the strikers and let the process continue for another 15 months. Alternatively, it would support the view of the Member for Hamilton Mountain (Ms. Dewar), which is to let the strike continue and ruin big and small industries in this country. It does not care.

While members of the NDP will say they support the average small-business person during the next election campaign, where were they when they were needed?

New Democrats suggest that this legislation is Draconian and hypocritical.

Mr. Rodriguez: You are a big hypocrite!

Mr. Reimer: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member for Selkirk—Interlake (Mr. Holtmann) is trying to present his point of view to the House. Perhaps you could ask members of the new democratic party at least to give him the courtesy of allowing him to say what he wants. They may not like what he is saying, but surely he has the right to say what he wants.

Mr. Nystrom: I have not said a word.

Mr. Keeper: Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. The Hon. Member said that our friend to the right—

Mr. Rodriguez: Far right.

Mr. Keeper:—was attempting to express himself and get his message across. But clearly he was trying to provoke a reaction from this side of the House. Otherwise, why would he be saying such nonsense? I think the Hon. Member is achieving his objective. Let the debate continue.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): While listening very carefully to the exchange that was taking place in the House, the Chair had the feeling that both the Hon. Member for Selkirk—Interlake (Mr. Holtmann) and some members of the New Democratic Party were enjoying that part of the exchange. I am sure that Hon. Members will want to take the opportunity to answer the Hon. Member, but he should be given the time and the opportunity to have his say.

Mr. Holtmann: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hope you will tack that extra time that was literally stolen from me this afternoon on to my time for debate.

Let us review what the strike was about and why we would, in fact, legislate the inside postal workers back to work. They were not striking in order to improve the high level of absenteeism, which is 17 days for inside postal workers, compared to an average of seven days of absenteeism among other workers in Canada. I heard nothing from the NDP about that situation which is very prevalent among inside postal workers.

While that is not something about which those workers can be proud, the NDP will find a way to say that it is great.

The reason they are on strike is to scuttle management's objectives to bring good, clean, efficient postal service to Canadians. When the NDP supports that type of action, one really wonders how 36 of them were elected as Members of Parliament.

The federal Government must return some sense to the situation. The workers are not even arguing over wages, which are good compared to those in the private sector.

History has proven that we cannot afford a lengthy postal strike because of its damaging effects on the country. Certainly, no one in the House should condone the violence which has been alluded to, although members of the new democratic party have said that violence can be condoned sometimes when it comes to international affairs. That Party, which claims to be the protector of the people, even condones violence. I believe that the Leader of the New Democratic Party even talked about gun-boat diplomacy, referring to some fishing off the coast of Newfoundland. That Party wanted violence. We do not want violence, and I think that is very evident in the actions taken by the Government.