

*Post Office*

I do not have time to put on the record all the wage agreements which have been signed, and which provide for a great deal more than 6 per cent. But let me say that there has been a deliberate and concentrated effort by the government, in particular by the Prime Minister and by the President of the Treasury Board, and which has not been publicly rejected by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey), a friend of labour, to put the blame for inflation on trade unions, particularly on those affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress and with the Confederation of National Trade Unions. There is no truth in the suggestions by the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the Prices and Incomes Commission that only workers belonging to trade unions are getting pay increases of more than 6 per cent. Here are some cases with respect to increases won by groups not affiliated with the CLC, and not usually considered as workers who belong to trade unions, in the accepted definition of those words.

The professors at the University of Toronto got an increase of 10 per cent for the coming year. Professors at York University got an increase of 14 per cent a year. Toronto metropolitan separate school teachers signed an agreement, according to yesterday's Toronto newspapers, which over the next two years will give them an increase of 21.3 per cent, almost twice as much as the government suggests should be the guideline. Last week Toronto metropolitan secondary teachers rejected a one year offer of 11.2 per cent as not being sufficient. So, Mr. Speaker, it is obvious from these examples, and I could give more to the House, that top civil servants, deputy ministers and those carrying on negotiations have received increases which are much greater than 6 per cent in recent years. I have talked about the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Bank of Canada. I ask the Postmaster General to tell us, if he speaks in today's debate, the increases given during the last three years to the deputy minister in his department or to Messrs. Harper and Monk, who are carrying on the negotiations. He will not do that, because he wants the public and our workers to know as little as possible. I submit he knows that his top advisers have been able to obtain much more than 6 per cent.

• (4:40 p.m.)

I say that the government has no right to demand of the postal workers, or other civil servants, that they shall be bound by a uni-

laterally decided arbitrary figure of 6 per cent. I think I may be permitted to use in this House the language that the Prime Minister used over the week end while addressing a group of auto workers. He told them that through their supposed exorbitant wage demands they were "screwing" the ordinary citizens of Canada. Incidentally, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) did not hesitate to approve a wage increase for the tow boat operators in Vancouver of substantially more than 6 per cent. I submit that when the Prime Minister says to the postal workers, or the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) says to the executive director of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, as he did in a letter the other day, that workers must be content with a maximum increase of 6 per cent, they are in fact "screwing" the Public Servants of this country.

I submit that the policy of the government has led inevitably, as the minister might have known and, as we on this side of the House warned it would, to the present situation, to the rotating strikes that inconvenience the public and to a possible strike of all postal employees. I hope I am wrong, although it seems to me on the basis of the facts, that the Postmaster General and the Prime Minister want a strike of all postal workers. That is the only logical conclusion that one can arrive at in trying to understand why we are in our present difficulties.

I join with the hon. member for Hillsborough in saying, as he said a few minutes ago, that the public does not want a strike and that postal workers do not want to strike. Nobody wants a strike. It is unnecessary and can be avoided. All that inconvenience to the public could be avoided if only the government would drop its arrogant, anti-labour attitude and the formula it has adopted, the guideline saying that wage increases shall not be more than 6 per cent. That guideline has been breached, as I have said today and on other occasions, by workers in the private sector of the economy as well as in the public sector. The provincial treasurer of Ontario, in a telegram to the Civil Service Association of Ontario made it clear that in bargaining with its civil servants the provincial government would not impose any guideline of 6 per cent.

During the conference held in Manitoba recently, the government of Manitoba made it clear that it would not agree to wage guidelines unless the federal government is pre-