

*Government Orders*

they are not guaranteed that they will be allowed back to work.

There is a presumption in the legislation that those employees are guilty of whatever management said when they made the decision to discipline them. Those employees are not given the benefit of any hearing. They are not given the benefit of any protection under a collective agreement. It is assumed that whatever management thinks is correct. Those people will not be expected to return to work as a result of this legislation.

To be fair to the minister, he does allow a clause, clause 5 (b) which states that these people can go to an arbitrator. If they win the arbitration, then they will be allowed to go back to work some time in the future. I do not think that is fair. Basically what this legislation is saying is that those people are guilty because that is what management thinks. As a result, they are not expected to go back to work. It is only later that they will be given a hearing to find out whether they were fairly or unfairly disciplined. I think that is putting the cart before the horse. It is completely unfair in this legislation.

One of the things that the government always asks us in regard to back-to-work legislation is will we pass it quickly. Will we move quickly through all stages. Will we agree to Committee of the Whole in order to pass this legislation because we do not want a postal strike. I note with interest that in the minister's speech he referred to the senior citizens who were lining up in the sweltering heat to collect income security cheques.

• (1310)

That is an example of where there was no need for our senior citizens to have a problem. The union had offered to deliver those seniors' cheques. Just in the last couple of weeks I wrote to Canada Post a couple of times trying to get it to agree that if there was a postal strike in the future it would allow those cheques to go through. It would allow the inside workers and the outside workers in this case to process and deliver those cheques. No senior would have to line up in the sweltering heat or the cold to get that cheque. They would not have to go and find some alternate post office and pick up their cheque there. We know that those cheques were often not there. Quite often seniors would line up, go to one of these centres and find out their cheque was not even there.

Here is the situation where the workers are willing to try and resolve one of the main problems of the postal dispute, and that is the delivery of cheques to pensioners, but the company for its own reasons will not agree to that.

When I hear the government saying it wants want legislation passed quickly because it affects senior citizens, we know that there was a way of resolving that dispute but Canada Post would not accept that route. For some reason, it wanted the scenes of seniors and handicapped waiting in long lines this summer. It wanted that. It knew they could have had those cheques delivered and it refused. It still refuse to accept the offer of the workers to deliver those pension cheques.

I do not always believe the government when it says in the House "you must pass this legislation quickly; you must do it—with one speaker at second reading you must immediately go into committee of the whole; you must sit up all night and pass the legislation".

I feel that process has almost become ingrained in this House of Commons.

I note with interest that in the last two pieces of back-to-work legislation, the president of the union and the employer appeared before the bar of the Senate and gave their presentations, expounding on their positions to the senators. One of the problems we have with the process of committee of the whole is that it never allows the members of Parliament who are going to vote on legislation and on clauses within that legislation to be heard from. It never allows us to hear from the people who are directly affected.

We have a process within the House of Commons which will allow people to be called before the bar of the House. That is something that the government has rejected in the past. We believe that there is a way of making sure that as we pass legislation, and indeed that is what the purpose of this bill is, to pass legislation, that we have an understanding of these clauses, that we have an understanding of what has taken place in negotiations. We should indeed know what we are dealing with as opposed to government members voting with the government and opposition members voting against the legislation.