Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Mr. Yves Forest (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I have been asked by the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) to reply on his behalf to the question raised by the hon. member for Hillsborough. I regret that I can offer no substantial information at this time. Discussions are continuing, as they have been for two weeks, between senior officials of the Post Office Department and the Council of Postal Workers. These negotiations are concerned with the implementation of the five day week, which will come into effect on February 17 and with the institution of what is called single mail processing by which letter carriers will no longer be required to return to the post office in the afternoon for the purpose of sorting mail. In addition, the Minister has met with the leaders of the unions involved.

• (10:20 p.m.)

On the other point raised by the hon. member, namely that of the directive by the unions to their members to enact what he has termed, or some newspapers have termed, work-to-rule, I can say that according to available information no such attempt is being made. No action taken by postal workers has resulted in any delays to mail delivery and service, and the fact that this should be the situation is an indication of the sense of public responsibility of those employees.

A small number of postal workers in a limited number of areas have exercised what they consider their right to return to the post office for a wash-up at the end of their day's work. Such action has no effect upon mail service. The post office disputes the right of its employees to take such action, and I repeat it has been taken in only a few instances. This matter forms part of the continuing discussions between post office officials and union representatives, and will be decided early next month by an adjudicator appointed under the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): The motion to adjourn the house is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this house stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.25 p.m.