

Government Organization

sense of duty to know that they will not abuse the right to strike which we are going to grant them. Today we have the proof that they are abusing it, even when they recognize that they are doing so illegally, and there are hon. members who stand behind them.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that is intolerable. It opens the door to chaos and anarchy, and it is high time we put an end to that.

I would even say that union members are beginning to be fed up with strikes called for any or no reason. The Canadian public in general, the taxpayers who are always asked to foot the bill for the settlement of these problems, are fed up also and they protest strongly. In fact, a certain number of union members have had their fill of being involved in costly strikes which, in many cases, are called for trivial reasons.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that when union leaders loudly proclaim on radio, on television or in public, that a strike, illegal or not, will take place, not only should they be taken to task but they should also be punished, if order is to be maintained in this country.

Mr. Chairman, the time is nearing when the majority of Canadians will fustigate these trade-unions, which were once justified, which have rendered and are still in a position to render services to the working class which constitutes a useful pressure group. Because of some irresponsible leaders and agitators, trade-unions are acting in such a way that the disorder, the chaos and the anarchy which are prevailing in our Canadian society will go against the workers, the wage-earners, who are always the most seriously affected.

I wish to protest against such an attitude. It should be enough, I think, to encourage the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) to stand firm against such blackmail as that to which he is being subjected in some circles.

• (3:20 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Howe: Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity presented by this government reorganization bill, particularly that part of the bill having to do with communications, to bring to the attention of the minister some of the things about which other hon. members have been speaking in the house and about which a great many of us have received voluminous correspondence. I do not know whether the cause was the increase in letter postal rates or the increase in the cost of postage for periodicals, but I have never had

as much correspondence on any subject during my period in the House of Commons as I have had lately in connection with Post Office matters. The reason may be that the new minister is seeking to sweep everything clean and make many changes as well as cause disruption among many people.

At any rate, I want to add my voice to all the people who have complained about the fact that so many post offices are being closed. This is going to happen or has happened to a great many post offices in my area, and it has caused a great deal of disruption to people who have depended on their local post offices not only for their mail but for sending postal money orders and doing a great deal of their postal business. The elimination of these local post offices will make a difference in their way of life, and in the case of some older people it will create real hardships. Therefore I think there are quite a few cases which the minister should look into.

Let us consider what happens when a small railway station is going to be closed. In such cases the people in the area are notified and if they want to present their case, which they used to do to the board of transport commissioners, they have an opportunity to voice their opposition to the action that is going to be taken. Sometimes I think this might be a good idea in connection with local post offices. I suggest to the Postmaster General that in some of these cases a hearing in the area might be informative to the people and might stop some of the complaints that are made to members of parliament, although it is only through the medium of correspondence of this kind that we can really find out everything that is going on in our ridings.

I have also had a great deal of correspondence, as have other members, in regard to increased postage on periodicals such as farm papers and church publications. As we know, many of these periodicals are non-profit publications and are issued by organizations which make a study in a specialized field. Whether the periodical deals with agriculture or business, this specialized information is of great value to the people who receive these papers. For instance, in the field of agriculture so much change is taking place these days that it is only through reading such periodicals and farm papers that our farmers can keep up to date. So I think that another look at the increases in postal rates might be worthwhile, and I am sure it would be of great value to the publishers of these periodicals. Many of them may have to fold up their