

strikes in any part of the public service, but especially in the Post Office. As I said, I think it would be unconscionable for this Parliament to adjourn for the summer without coming up with some form of legislation recommending some solution to end this strike in the absence of negotiation.

People keep talking about bad faith being shown on both sides of the postal dispute. But the ultimate act of bad faith would be shown by the Parliament of Canada to the people of this country if we were to take our three-month holiday and leave this nation in the grip of a postal union whose actions are crippling the country and causing all sorts of economic hardships to the people of Canada.

My leader touched on the costs of the 1975 mail strike and what that could mean in 1981 dollar terms. The 1975 strike lasted 42 days. According to the Canadian Direct Mail Marketing Association, the expected loss to the Canadian economy for a 1981 postal strike of the same timing and duration as the 1975 strike is \$407.6 million, which amounts to \$9.7 million per day.

Reference was made earlier to Mary McMaster's pottery operation in my home town of Dundas, Ontario. That pottery business is a small business with 21 employees. Mrs. McMaster has closed down her plant for the rest of the summer, laying off 21 people because she cannot receive incoming orders or accounts and she cannot do her billing. Understandably, Mrs. McMaster is fed up with the Post Office. She is fed up with the strikes and the salaries disputes. In fact, she is fed up with the whole civil service. Mrs. MacMaster feels, and she is just one of many hundreds of thousands of Canadians expressing this view, that it is totally irresponsible for this Parliament to recess during the postal strike, abandoning thousands of small business owners to deal with this colossal problem on their own. Having talked to Mary McMaster myself, I know what a problem this will be for her because having laid off these 21 employees, it will take her months to gear everything up again. There are many thousands of businesses which are like Mary McMaster's.

People on the government side who are trying to duck this issue and run away from it ask what positive proposal we have on this side. I would suggest that perhaps we return to the idea of a public interest disputes commission. This proposal was made by the former postmaster general, the hon. member for Vancouver South, when the Conservative government was in power. He said:

It is recognized that sometimes the private right to strike or lockout must give way to the larger public right to receive essential services, whether those services are provided in the public or the private sector.

In order to help prevent recourse to strikes affecting essential services, the Progressive Conservative Party advocates the establishment of a public interest disputes commission. This was first recommended in 1968 by Dean H. D. Woods and others who made up the federally appointed Task Force on Canadian Industrial Relations. The Task Force Report said:

"The public has an interest in being protected from the hardship caused by work stoppages which interrupt the supply of essential goods and services."

### *Summer Recess*

However, while some services are easily defined in advance as "essential" a strike can have effects under some circumstances that are not easily anticipated.

Again, I come back to Mary McMaster and the 21 employees that she had to lay off about 48 hours ago.

The Woods report listed seven factors that should be considered in finding solutions to essential service disputes. Because labour relations are not nearly as simple as some believe, these factors need to be understood and are set out exactly as they appear in the report. I will not take the time to read that report into the record. It may be found elsewhere in *Hansard*. But a public interest disputes commission would be a new approach, a better management-labour climate in both the public and the private sectors. The report states that new approaches are working in other jurisdictions and, where compatible, experience gained in these other areas may well be incorporated along with the Woods report suggestions.

We on this side have said we will consult with labour and management and prepare legislation for introduction to Parliament once we become the Government of Canada again. This is an idea which we are dusting off, but it is an important one. Labour and management relations are essentially a matter of human relations. Just passing more laws is not the answer. We believe that the public interests disputes commission is a step toward establishing a more effective framework for the settlement of legitimate issues. It could serve to minimize work stoppages in essential services.

● (1550)

In closing these brief remarks, I would like to reiterate that this Parliament and we as elected representatives have a right and a duty to speak on behalf of the Canadian people. We want to ensure that we are representing their best interests. Their best interests right now are served by getting the mail going again. However the mail gets going, whether it is through a negotiated settlement or Parliament legislating the CUPW workers back to work, we will not know until after the weekend. However, in the final analysis, we the representatives in this institution are responsible to the Canadian people to keep one of the most essential and fundamental Canadian services going. That is Her Majesty's Royal Mail, Canada's post office. That is why we feel it would be dead wrong for this House to rise this afternoon leaving the country in the grips of this crippling and very unfortunate postal strike.

**Mr. Fennell:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the matter of the adjournment of this House which has been brought forward by the President of the Privy Council. During his remarks, he explained in a glorious fashion how his government had 61 bills passed through this House.

**An hon. Member:** Sixty-five.

**Mr. Fennell:** Sixty-five, 103. I wish to state unequivocally that I could not agree with at least 66 per cent of those bills. They will destroy the economy of Canada and take away the rights of Canadian citizens. They are bills which will expropriate the property of Canadians. The government has not accomplished very much since the session began in April, 1980.