

Government Orders

encourages overstaffing and high labour costs. Lack of competition prevents managers from controlling labour costs by shielding them from the necessity of pressing for economical wage settlements”.

Despite what we say and think in this House, I think the average Canadian believes the employees are paid rather well for the work that they do, although they are not the highest paid people in the country. They are paid rather well for what they do. In this morning's *Globe and Mail* it is mentioned that 46,000 postal carriers and inside workers represented by CUPW earn an average of \$14.24 an hour, with a cost of living clause which generally adds something in the vicinity of 17 cents an hour to what they are paid.

In some parts of the country I guess people would argue and could argue maybe successfully that is not enough. Believe me, from the part of the country that I come from and the part that I represent, that is certainly way above the average. It would be close to double what the average employee would make in the maritime provinces.

That is not the whole story. Wages cannot do it all. I think there has got to be a way that Canada Post can sit down and talk through this thing and maybe create a new sense of co-operation between Canada Post and its employees. Dollars will not do the whole thing. There has got to be a need to resolve this thing and a need to try to bring an end to the sort of discontent that has been so evident in this corporation for so many years.

Again, going back to the people in this country who depend on Canada Post for service, I want to read a letter that was forwarded to me this morning. The letter was addressed to the hon. Harvie Andre, government House leader and minister responsible for Canada Post. I want to read this letter because it goes back to my opening remarks of how important it is to resolve this dispute and how important it is that Canadians have a postal service that they can depend on. The letter begins:

Dear Mr. Andre:

On behalf of the New Brunswick Lung Association and the thousands of New Brunswickers who suffer from lung disease I am writing to convey our association's grave concern about the possibility again of disruption of the postal service.

This association is a constituent of Canada's most senior health charity, making a substantial contribution to the respiratory health of Canadians since early in this century.

Because of Christmas seals, our major source of funds, our organization led the way in the near eradication of tuberculosis. We are leaders in health promotion through smoking prevention, reduction initiatives and have been since the late 1960s and have helped Canada achieve a fine reputation in this area.

In New Brunswick, Christmas seals account for 85 per cent of our funds, allowing us to support national research and carry on effective community services. Our family asthma clinics, camp, peer group, support groups, workshops, asthma smoking help line, equipment loan programs, smoking cessation programs, and school health programs are hostage to this threatened labour disruption.

In many areas we relieve government of the need to provide service.

That is a very, very important point.

Our small organization's biggest expense item is what we pay for postal service to reach our donors and clients. We comply with many regulations, sign contracts of commitment with this Crown corporation, and have no guarantees of it delivering its part of these agreements.

Already our organization has made a major financial investment in materials for this time-sensitive campaign. We cannot postpone Christmas or save our 1992 health calendars for 1993. Hundreds of hours have been spent by volunteers to prepare mail and we have no other delivery option. We are looking at not only lost donations which are devastating but also lost investment that cannot be recouped.

Donors tell us that their confidence in donations being returned is affected by the confusion in your system.

The lung association and its volunteers are making a substantial contribution to the lives of Canadians. We believe it is incumbent on your government to restore order to this system and to provide Canadians with a dependable service.

For your information the concept of the Christmas seal as a weapon against lung disease world-wide was initiated by a postman in Copenhagen in 1903.

• (1340)

Mr. John B. Barry concludes by saying:

He certainly did his part. Please settle with your unions and let us do ours.

That pretty well sums up the feeling of most Canadians. We feel we are being held hostage to a degree by Canada Post and its unions. It is not like we are out to destroy the unions, but clearly something has broken down and this has been a recurring theme. We have gone through these things since 1967. I do not know how many strikes we have had.