

from the rest of the country. Would this bill be applicable in a case of that kind?

**Hon. Mr. Denis:** Yes, of course, if the interruption lasts more than 48 hours.

**Hon. Mr. Hugessen:** Then my next question is: Why 48 hours?

**Hon. Mr. Denis:** There may be dozens and dozens of cases in which the interruption lasts for just one day, and will not affect the time taken to have mail delivered from one point to another. If the interruption lasts for only 12 hours, then there is some chance that the mail will reach its destination without any real delay.

**Hon. Mr. Hugessen:** I am not criticizing the bill. I am addressing these observations to the point that this bill should go before a committee so that we may know exactly what is involved.

**Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West):** I agree.

**Hon. Gunnar S. Thorvaldson:** Honourable senators, I wish to make only a few remarks in connection with this bill. I do not want to criticize it, or to praise it. I shall follow the injunction urged by Senator Power a few moments ago, that it is always the better part of wisdom for members of legislative bodies to talk very little. I will modify that somewhat and say that I shall not talk too much.

This is, however, a very important bill, and it does seem to me to be a new type of legislation of which we do not have many other examples. For that reason it would be very beneficial, I believe, to have it referred to a committee, as was suggested by Senator Hugessen, presuming that we have sufficient time to do so before the Christmas recess.

In respect to referring the bill to committee I have in mind exactly the same reasons put forward by Senator Hugessen, one of which is in connection with the limitation of 48 hours as provided in clause 2 of the bill. Why should it be 48 hours rather than 24 hours, or some other length of time? We should have an explanation from the officials of the Department of Justice in respect to that.

There are various other phrases in this bill, some of which are of a most general nature, and these might be the subject of revision if the minds of the committee members are applied to them.

There has also been reference to the fact that this bill applies only to legislation of Canada. Quite obviously that is so, because there is no authority in the Parliament of

Canada to interfere with provincial statutes. Nevertheless, this bill points up the fact that there are many provincial acts which provide for limitations on periods of time. There are, for instance, the motor vehicle acts of the various provinces under which a plaintiff must sue before the expiration of one year or lose all his rights to sue. One can understand that there might be situations where legal offices in faraway places write to a legal office in, say, Vancouver and instruct that action be taken two or three days before the expiration of the time limit. In a situation such as that of the postal strike of 1965, which was of 15 or 16 days' duration, one can well see that a great number of situations might arise in which the rights of individuals could be affected most prejudicially.

**Hon. Mr. Hugessen:** If I may interrupt my honourable friend, I wonder whether we can deal with the laws of provinces, or the laws of other countries. It seems to me that by this bill we are giving power to a judge of the Exchequer Court to vary such laws. I do not think we can do that, can we?

**Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson:** I quite agree with what Senator Hugessen has said, and I think it would be of value if a committee could question officials of the Department of Justice as to their opinion on the constitutional limits of this measure.

**Hon. Mr. Hugessen:** Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson:** However, I want to say again that this bill points up the tremendous harm and damage that can be done to this country and its people if there ever occurred another postal strike such as that of 1965. It points up also the importance of the debate we now have on the Order Paper, namely, Order No. 4, the debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Cameron calling the attention of the Senate to the disruptive and costly effects of strikes in services affecting the public welfare. I can think of no department of government which is more important to the public welfare than the Post Office Department. Consequently, I am in hearty agreement with the purposes of this bill.

At the same time I want to urge upon all honourable senators the necessity, as has been indicated by my leader (Hon. Mr. Brooks), of finding some way in the near future of dealing more comprehensively with these problems that arise, not only in the public service but in services where much more than local interests