

Time Allocation

Office is an institution which handles one of the largest volumes of money of any business in Canada. It is close to that of the automotive industry. Despite that fact, it is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days per week, which does not meet the needs of modern day society.

The situation today is that many families are single parent families or both spouses are working. We need a postal service that is open early and open late, that gives service during noon hours, and that is located in convenient locations. In many medium-sized cities with present postal services, people must make trips to the post office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and the post offices are located in inconvenient places.

In conclusion, let me say that what the other Parties are saying is that the nub of the issue for them is the real reason the legislation ought to go forward, so that the country can get on with serving its public as it wants and needs to be served.

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I rise to participate in the debate because I think it is important that we do not stop debating the issue. What we have before us is a Draconian Bill. It is difficult to believe that this kind of law can be proposed in Canada in 1987.

What really upsets me is that the mail was moving, with rotating strikes and negotiations were ongoing. However, as soon as the Government started to suggest that we might have this kind of legislation before the House, the employer ceased to agree to any of the clauses on which they had come to agreement. I wish government Members would recognize that they are discouraging collective bargaining.

It is nice to hear about the hearts and flowers, that there will be people in the communities who will be able to take these jobs. However, over the years women have worked hard to obtain decent paying jobs. Through the efforts of CUPW they were able to obtain those kinds of jobs.

Government Members should not play games. The hidden agenda is union breaking. When have we ever had a Government endorsing the hiring of scabs? We would not see that happening with Chrysler, Stelco, General Motors, or Ford, because the private sector has learned to respect collective bargaining. This Government is actually putting its stamp of approval on its hiring of scabs. What does that do, Madam Speaker? It pits Canadian worker against Canadian worker.

● (1600)

I notice with some interest that the previous speaker alluded to the kind of violence that has gone on during the strike. The violence started to take place after this legislation was introduced. What kind of violence was taking place? The Member named a number of CUPE people who have been arrested, but he forgot that there was a CUPE Member who was seen on national news with a broken pelvis. She was run over by a truck driven by one of the people taking in scabs. The Member did not have any shame about that. It seems to me that we should all be hanging our heads in shame.

We are talking about reducing the wages of women who will be working in the post offices that are franchised out. The union said it would look at franchising. The union has given, compromised and done all sorts of things in new developments so service would be there for the people. The union was looking for compromise because it was looking for resolution. What happened? The employer said no, because the Government said that it was going to hire replacement workers and introduce back-to-work legislation.

Collective bargaining does not mean a tinker's damn. We have to understand that this whole tactic of the Government is a military one, pitting Canadian worker against Canadian worker, saying that things are being done to save money. But we do not save money with this kind of tactic.

When you reduce wages being brought into a family, what you are doing is hitting at small business everywhere in a community. What about a child coming home asking, "Mommy, can I just go to the store for a treat this week?" Mommy has to say, "Sorry, you can't. I no longer have the kind of job to afford those kinds of things. Now we have to scrape for mere existence". The Government is bragging about the fact that it will be able to hire women at \$5 an hour. Surely when you are talking about the heart of a community, you cannot be bragging about that kind of thing.

It distresses me that in 1987 we have not recognized what is the dignity of work. That is part of what this debate is all about. That is perhaps why the Government wants to start to restrict the amount of time in this debate. It cannot stand looking into its own heart, recognizing what it is doing to the soul of the country.

I appreciate that the small post office is the meeting place. People see their friends there, exchange greetings, get their letters, bills and often receive cheques. It has also become the centre of many of our smaller communities. The Government is saying that this that is the end of a Canadian tradition, that it will no longer stand for that, that the market will control things and when it can pay people the least amount of money, that is what it is going to do. The Government's aim is to keep the people poor and exploit them. It is doing a good job. It says that it will create jobs across the country. Of course the Government will create jobs, but it will put people out of work. Other people will be in those jobs getting half the wages of those who have been working for a good standard of living in a quality kind of job.

We are not talking about people who have been ripping off the system, we are talking about women who have worked many years on the night shift. They have worked hard, in many cases to supplement income, and often have been the sole wage earners. When they finished after many years they got promoted to wicket jobs where they could at last work days. But we hear that that is a luxury, and that they are being paid far too much. I would like every Member in this House to attempt to keep his or her family on \$12 an hour and think they are living in luxury. Figure out what that is and then tell