

*Time Allocation*

and farmers gather and exchange views and ideas. It is a place where people exchange friendly letters. It is a place where bills are paid and cheques are received. Having said all of that as to how it touches us emotionally, let me say that Canadians clearly and dearly are looking forward to a settlement of this present dispute.

I submit, Madam Speaker, that there are only four alternatives which the Government has to enable it to approach this particular subject. First, it could shut down the Post Office. It could be shut down simply by allowing a strike to proceed; the two parties to come into dispute and to allow the Post Office to be closed and not serve Canadians. Of course, that approach was tried by the Liberals in 1975, and with some support from the New Democratic Party. It was tried in that there was a 42-day postal strike. During that period of time the small business community everywhere expressed the view that this was crippling the country, destroying business, and putting other innocent Canadians out of work. In response to a question by a media personality, the leader of the inside postal workers union stated that he could not care less that there was some significant damage being done to others.

• (1550)

Apart from shutting down the Post Office by allowing a protracted strike, a third option would be to give in to the demands of the postal union. Again, that approach has been tried. It was tried by the Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet) when he was Postmaster General of Canada. It was also tried when the Hon. Bryce Mackasey was Postmaster General of Canada.

Much of the present view of Canadians regarding to how they look upon the present conditions and salaries of the Post Office is tied to the fact that we gave in to postal demands which seemed to be excessive at the time. We could order them back to work and put an arbitrator in place as a fourth option. We could use replacement workers and have the Post Office continue to operate. I believe it is clear that Canadians everywhere want to have the postal system operating.

I want to take a look at the present situation which I think is bringing about conditions that are of concern to and perhaps very close to and in some instances already dangerous for picket line workers. I submit that it is inappropriate for members of the Opposition to prolong the debate, especially when members of the Liberal Party are in a position to bring forward in committee of the whole the amendments they seek. They have had discussions with the Minister and they recognize that there is a willingness to co-operate. I believe that approach to be a responsible one. However, the longer we hold up the back-to-work legislation, the more we risk some dangerous situations taking place on the picket lines.

Those situations have already been enumerated in the House, but I think it is appropriate for me to repeat them. In Victoria, a picket struck a supervisor, and CUPW members interfered with mail collection from street letter boxes by

harassing the drivers. In Vancouver, 16 replacement workers were assaulted as they were entering a marshalling site. In Regina, a picket kicked the door of a pizza delivery vehicle, and another picket threw himself on its hood. In Saskatoon, a number of replacement workers' car tires were slashed, and a picket smashed a window in a bus carrying replacement workers into the MPP. The man was arrested by police. In Edmonton, a picket was arrested for mischief after throwing bricks at a bus carrying replacement workers. In Winnipeg, the mail room in a high rise apartment building was broken into. In Cornwall, Ontario, a hockey stick smashed through van windows. A female replacement worker was hit. She was taken to hospital. While she was okay, the President of the CUPW local was arrested and charged with mischief. In London, a picket was charged with assault. Also in London, the lobby mailboxes of 15 apartment buildings were vandalized with glue in the locking mechanisms.

Turning to Atlantic Canada, in St. John's, a CUPW member was charged with common assault, and 15 vehicles received punctured tires while waiting entry into plant grounds. In Saint John, two vehicles received slashed tires, and two quarts of paint were spread on a tractor. In Moncton, a bus carrying replacement workers was hit with eggs and blue paint bombs. In Gagetown, charges of mischief are being laid against CUPW members for smashing eggs on a vehicle. In Fredericton, a picket was charged after striking a man with a picket sign, and two other pickets were charged after throwing eggs. The tires of a bus used to carry replacement workers were slashed, and potatoes were put in the exhaust of the bus.

We must bear in mind, as the Hon. Member for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault) indicated, that there is a willingness to look at some of the amendments and accept the reasonable ones. However, for members of the New Democratic Party to take the view that somehow it is inappropriate to move forward with this important piece of national legislation until all of their unreasonable demands are met, places risk and onus upon them in respect of the dangerous potential in the picket line situation.

Let us look at the question of franchising-out. Let me say, probably as sincerely as anyone can in that I come from a constituency which has 113 individual communities, that franchising out more than anything else will ensure postal service for those communities long into the future. In some villages and hamlets where the Post Office presently exists, the only other facility is a local store. When a postmaster or postmistress retires, there is virtually no one in the community willing or ready to take up the service. Franchising out means that the local grocery store next door will be able to take up the service and continue to offer it to the community. As the Government of Canada, we project that some 6,000 new rural services will open across Canada in the next 10 years, yet members of the New Democratic Party would like to hold out that somehow that is inappropriate.

Since many of them represent communities much larger than those in my riding, I want to tell them that the Post