

Post Office

amendment) from the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Pepin moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to suggest there is just about time to put through Bill C-196. The minister from Saskatoon can take it on.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed to the discussion under Standing Order 26 of the matter raised by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) and the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis).

Mr. Forrestall: He did not even show up to participate.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26**POST OFFICE****ACCELERATED DISRUPTION OF SERVICE—
FAILURE TO NEGOTIATE SETTLEMENT
OF DISPUTE**

Mr. Speaker: The matter to be debated under this Order is:

The new situation created by the acceleration and spread of the rotational strikes by postal employees, thus creating a new threat of a nationwide postal strike, the failure of the Treasury Board to negotiate a settlement to end the disruption of postal services, and the urgent need to debate the serious situation before the House adjourns for the summer recess.

The hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie).

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough) moved:

That this House do now adjourn.

He said: Mr. Speaker, while I am naturally glad that this debate has been granted I may say, sir, I regret very much that we end this portion of our session dealing with such a matter on such a note. It is regrettable that the country is still faced with a communications crisis following much disruption in a very important part of the public service, namely the Post Office. The Canadian people expect certain things of their government. One of their basic expectations purely and simply is that the mail should go through.

Canadians have a right to communicate one with another and their government should ensure that their communications are delivered. Today, the mail is at a standstill in this city and elsewhere in Canada. A war of nerves is being carried out. I read in today's evening paper that the chief negotiators maintain that there seems to be no prospect of settlement. In a labour dispute, of course, there are two sides. Neither management nor labour is all right or all wrong in their point of view.

Today in this important debate I seek not to speak for labour and not to speak for the government. If I were Demosthenes himself, I would not undertake that case. Rather do I try to speak for the third party, the party which should also, through the government, be represented at the bargaining table but which, alas, I fear seems to have had no voice in these recent troubled times and tangled negotiations. When I speak of the third party, I refer to the people of Canada. Their rights, their legitimate demands, their proper expectations transcend all argument about guidelines, about conciliation reports or about points of negotiation. While the government, through the Treasury Board, is in a narrow sense in the role of the employer, it is in a much more basic and much broader sense the custodian of the general interest, the guarantor of the rights of the people of Canada. In that role and in that function, it has been, I submit, abysmally unsuccessful.

Indeed, in the more narrow function as employer the government has displayed a brittle, bungling brinkmanship which has been calculated to ensure the failure of negotiations. I cannot say that the government wanted the negotiations to fail—I do not know—but I can say that if they did want them to fail they could not have proceeded in any way better calculated to bring about that result. The Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans), widely castigated as the most anti-labour Postmaster General since Confederation, made his immortal contribution when he said in the House on May 19, as recorded at page 7062 of *Hansard*:

People who seek contractual obligations sometimes seek not the work but the pay without the work.

What a contribution to harmonious negotiation! What a contribution to eventual settlement! But the minister whose contributions to worker morale are now well known had help in this latest effort. No more unlikely agent of