

the union because I do not think they have the support of the people. Therefore, they are happy to have the support of the opposition in a legislated settlement, rather than one which is reached through fair collective bargaining.

#### PLANS FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS

**Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West):** Madam Speaker, the public interest only seems to matter to the Prime Minister when the banks, insurance companies and others are not covered, which they already have been.

Not very long ago the current Attorney General set a record. In two years, when he was president of the Treasury Board, we lost 900,000 man-days to strikes and lay-offs. The current President of the Treasury Board has set a new record. In one year and four months we have lost 1,400,000 man-days from strikes and lay-offs. Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians this: why should any Canadian have any reason to believe that a settlement will be achieved under a man whose record is strikes, lay-offs, and days lost, and why will the Prime Minister not tell Canadians exactly what it is he will do if he is serious about getting the parties back to the table?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, any employer at any time can settle a strike by giving in to the union and giving them what they ask. As the President of the Treasury Board indicated the other day, if we were to give in to the maximum demand of the union it would be a salary increase of some 28 per cent in one year. That is the price which could have been paid at the outset to avoid a strike. However, we on this side believe it would have been irresponsible to introduce that kind of settlement. Since it is the opposition which has kept the House around, presumably to have a legislated settlement, maybe I could hear from the hon. member or his leader what they would be prepared to offer to settle the strike.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Turn over the government.

#### QUERY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT MOVE TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board. Just a minute ago the Prime Minister said the two parties are bargaining. Regrettably, as everyone knows, that is not the case. The postal workers have made two steps to try to return to the bargaining table, the first where they said if the government would accept the conciliation board recommendations, they would go back, which the government turned down; then they said if Mr. Warren, the head of the new Crown corporation to be set up to run the Post Office, joined the table, they would go back. The government has turned that down.

Since in the bargaining process a conciliatory attitude is a two way street, I ask the minister when is the government going to make a serious move to resume negotiations?

#### Oral Questions

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, I certainly welcome that question, given the fact we have no preconditions for negotiations. I call that a conciliatory position, compared to a union which first of all establishes preconditions and then substitutes another precondition for the former precondition. It becomes perfectly apparent, Madam Speaker, that the union to date has shown no interest in negotiations.

In any event, I am pleased to advise the House that I have today requested Treasury Board to apply to the Public Service Staff Relations Board for the appointment of a mediator. Let us hope that this at least will be a step with which the union will see fit to co-operate.

● (1425)

#### ROLE OF MEDIATOR

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, with specific reference to the appointment of a mediator, will the mediator have the same mandate which the negotiators for the government had before talks broke off? Will the mediator be locked into the government's previously established position, which means that there will not be any mediation at all, or will he begin with an assumption that the government's appointed conciliation board recommendation is a pretty reasonable one, namely, that the cost difference between what the conciliation board recommended—which the union has gone along with but the government turned it down; it was only 2 per cent—and what the union is really after are non-costly work conditions, civilizing conditions, in the workplace? Will the mediator have a mandate which will enable him to make appropriate gestures in the direction of the government's own conciliation board recommendation?

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, first, the mediator does not have a mandate. The mediator will be there to mediate between the parties. Since we are unable to bring the union to the negotiating table and talk directly with the union, we must have an intermediary. We hope the union will accept a mediator.

When I hear statements to the effect that some of these issues are not costly, I would remind the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party that some of the particular issues which will be the subject of mediation are very costly. I suggest that we are talking about a wide variety of issues. We have always been prepared to sit down and negotiate without preconditions, but we insist that the union come forward and accept mediation at this stage in order to unblock the impasse.

#### WORKING CONDITIONS AFFECTING WOMEN

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, my final supplementary question is directed to the same minister. The minister knows, if the mediation process is to be successful at all, that the mediator must take in there a different attitude than that of the government. Does the minister dispute the claim that the gap between the conciliation board recommendation and what the government has already indicated that it