

Post Office

ble; it was what they were able to show me was reasonable in terms of their needs. Any organization that negotiates on a poorer basis than that is not really negotiating.

Mr. Côté: How much did you give your kids?

Mr. Peters: I usually ended up giving them \$5. I do not believe that in negotiations one should give more than is asked. The minister asked this afternoon how much we would give them. We would give them somewhere between 5 per cent and what they are asking for. I suggest that this is the only way in which negotiations can be conducted. If these workers are told day in and day out that they will lose their jobs because of automation, then you should give them greater security than they have today. I am not telling the minister what kind of security he should give them, but I am telling him to be reasonable, to be responsible and to negotiate a wage somewhere between their demands and what he thinks is fair and reasonable. He represents the country, and he represents me in these negotiations. We do not want to give more than the \$5 the kid asks for, but surely we can go part way in giving these workers what they ask for, if they can show us that it is reasonable.

I suggest that if all the civil servants who do not have a bargaining agency receive the same as is being offered to this union, either the government is not being reasonable or these people had better get rid of their union. If the government think they are justified in forcing a strike situation which will be costly to everyone, they will eventually have to ask us to come back to Parliament to solve their problems for them. I suggest it may cost them more in the end. I suggest that if the Commissioners of Internal Economy could have given the civil servants under your jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker, out of the goodness of their hearts, 5 per cent, the government should at least be as generous or more generous with the people who are negotiating with them and offer them a wage half way between what they think is reasonable, which is 5 per cent, and what the union is asking for. The negotiations can be brought to a conclusion very easily if both parties meet halfway.

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, I should like to add a few words to this debate. The hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) said he would be the last to speak in this part of the session of Parliament. He may or may not be. However, it
[Mr. Peters.]

seems to me that the whole debate this afternoon is focused on a very basic problem in the country. I do not really think that more talk in this chamber will help the workers, help the government or help anyone else. But I do think that the government has to accept its responsibility in this very basic problem of the postal service for Canadians.

To my mind this situation illustrates the malaise that is starting to affect the whole society. It is not a breakdown of law and order, but a breakdown in the credibility and responsibility of the government. It is a breakdown in our reliance on things which we used to take for granted. Perhaps the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) should go up in the air in a rocket to see Telesat, and from up there perhaps he could help solve the postal problem. Perhaps he could do that better than by giving gratuitous press conferences in the lobbies and corridors, which I think upsets the balance in the collective bargaining process.

I think the basic problem, which the President of the Treasury Board in his bland statement in the House today completely ignored, of the Canadian public who have always relied on a reliable Post Office service and who have always believed that the mail goes through regardless of sleet and snow—a belief which has now been upset—is that the mail service is disturbed or is not working, depending on what part of the country you are in when the rotational strike hits. Mr. Laniel from Beauharnois, or whoever he may be—

An hon. Member: Don't be so comic.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows he cannot refer to his colleagues by name. He should refer to their constituency.

Mr. Nowlan: I apologize, Mr. Speaker, but I have not seen the hon. member often enough to know him by his constituency. However, I realize that that is what I should have done. Be that as it may—and I will conclude in 30 seconds—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nowlan: If I get such applause when I say I will close in 30 seconds, perhaps I should suggest that I will do so in two minutes and the applause will increase in ratio. I do not intend to hold anything up but I want to impress upon the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury)—I do not think