

*Summer Recess*

come back, it can be done very quickly. However, it is quite different to have Parliament out there having to be called back, rather than having it sitting here. I earnestly hope we can reach agreement on this very soon.

As I say, the Minister of Labour indulged in a few political barbs which were enjoyed on his side of the House and laughed at on the other side. However, it seems to me we are faced with the fact that the Leader of the Opposition and his party have themselves in a bit of a box. They made the statement, almost a threat, that the House would not leave until the mails are moving. That puts them in a spot now, even though there is some hope this might be done. Can they accept that hope and let us go, or do they have to keep us here day after day until the mails are actually moving again?

I would like to say that I would be prepared to refrain from casting any barbs at them for having changed their minds if they become responsible and agree to let this motion pass, and let Judge Gold get on with the job. I would also like to remind all members of the House—and I received the material from the Library just a few moments ago to confirm my memory—that we are dealing with a piece of legislation, namely the Public Service Staff Relations Act, under which the present strike is taking place and which was agreed to unanimously. It is not to be called Liberal legislation; it was supported by all parties in this House, and at that time there were four. As a matter of fact, there were no recorded votes in the House at any stage with respect to that legislation.

In those days we had an additional stage which we do not have now. We had a resolution preceding the introduction of the bill. It was debated in committee of the whole and supported unanimously. Then came second reading, it was debated, and supported unanimously. I have the relevant page of *Hansard* right here on my desk. It was then sent off to a special joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons and considered at great length. I remember the experience very well. David Lewis and I were the members of our party on that committee. One of the leading spokesmen for the Progressive Conservative Party at that time was Dick Bell, who had very strong views. However, we found the give and take and back and forth in that committee a very useful experience.

May I say we had several votes in that committee as we moved amendments, and had them accepted or rejected. However, when that committee finally reported the bill with amendments, it came back to the Committee of the Whole House, was considered again and no more amendments were made. It was then debated at third reading and passed without a recorded vote.

● (1610)

The Public Service Staff Relations Act, more so than many pieces of legislation, clearly represented the will of the whole of Parliament at that time. The Senate agreed to it as well, very quickly; they had no votes over there and some of their members were on the joint committee.

For people to argue now that we should deny the rights which Parliament gave so unanimously to public servants is

hardly playing the game. Therefore, I hope this will not be looked on as a partisan matter. I know the arguments that come up when a strike is prolonged and so on. I support the position taken by the government that this is not the time to talk about back-to-work legislation. This is the time to leave it to them as though they have to settle it. If we stay here, that will not be the situation. Therefore, I hope we will agree to the adjournment motion.

If I thought that by staying here we could get some legislation on other matters which I regard as important, that would put me in a dilemma but I would probably come down on the side of staying. We all know that if we stay we will be debating Bill C-48. What do we have? There are more than 50 report stage amendments and third reading after that. Although the debate on third reading is not supposed to come until fall, if we debate the report stage for a number of weeks it will be fall. I do not see any point in voting to stay here for the purpose of dealing with Bill C-48. There are too many things about that bill to which we object. We think that too many of our people, especially our northerners, are being defrauded in that legislation. To stay for that bill does not make any sense at all.

If I thought I could get action on some of the points that I raised today, such as inequalities and unfairnesses in the Public Service Superannuation Act, in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act, and in the Canadian Armed Forces Superannuation Act, I would be glad to stay. If I thought I could persuade the Minister of National Health and Welfare to do something for women between ages 55 and 60 and between 60 and 65, if I thought we could get something a lot better for women between 60 and 65 than the spouse's allowance, I would stay. There is no sign of that. I regret it.

I think the way the government has put the country off with respect to pensions, by having a pensions conference a while ago from which nothing seems to have flowed and by telling us again today that there is a task force, is a disgrace. The task force has been around for a long time. We are told that the economy is strong, that there are billions of dollars around, and that there is money for some things when we want it, but that pensioners just have to wait. I regret that position very much. If by staying all summer I could make a speech on some aspects of the pension subject every day, I would be glad to stay. I do not see that happening. All that will happen if we stay is that we will continue to debate Bill C-48. We will get it closer to being passed, which my party is opposed to doing. In my view, our presence here will hamper the important negotiations in which Judge Alan Gold will be engaged with CUPW and with the officers of the Treasury Board. Therefore, I hope we can cool down and not be bound by things which may have been said in the heat of the past. I hope we can realize that it makes good sense for us to support the motion.

I do not think it is unfair to say as well that members of Parliament and their families have certain rights. I am not involved in this way at my particular status, although I have grandchildren I would like to see. But I think it is worth considering younger members with their families whose holidays have been upset. This may sound strange coming from