



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Striking postal workers look over a mediation talks update on the picket line outside the Milton post office. See story at right.

Postal Service Strike and lockouts labour dispute
Time slipping away for settlement

Time is reportedly running out quickly for a settlement in the postal workers' strike.
 If a federal mediator fails to bring about an end to the strike over the next few days, government back-to-work legislation is expected to be introduced as early as Monday to restore mail service in time for the Christmas rush.
 Mediator Warren Edmondson got involved in the labour dispute between Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) Monday after talks stalled.
 "I hope both sides show some willingness to move," he told Canadian Press.
 Miltonians have been without mail service since the postal workers walked off the job November 19.
 The strike came after Canada Post laid off employees due to a work shortage brought on by the threat of a walkout.
 The labour dispute includes the town's 35 mail carriers and wicket clerks in CUPW local 223. The workers have spent the strike picketing outside the Brown

Street post office, which has remained closed.
 Meanwhile, talks are continuing, but Mr. Edmondson said there's a wide gap between negotiating positions.
 Canada Post and its union are reportedly at loggerheads over how to update the mail delivery service.
 Among the bones of contention is how the routes of letter carriers are measured and the amount of time allowed for them to deliver mail.
 The union has asked for what amounts to a 10 per cent wage increase over two years — 3 per cent this year and next, plus a cost-of-living allowance.
 Canada Post has offered 1.5 per cent this year, 1.75 next year and 2 per cent in 1999.
 If mediation fails, the government has to give 48 hours notice of its intention to bring in back-to-work legislation. Without unanimous consent from MPs, it could take up to 10 days for legislation to be passed after it is introduced.
 The House of Commons adjourns for the Christmas break December 12.

hospital merger Milton-hospital health service
Halton chair likes hospital report

It appears an operation to remove some of Halton's health care services will not be necessary.
 A recent report by the Ontario Health Services Restructuring Commission said that areas around Toronto are generally under-served by health care due to their growing populations.
 Halton Chair Joyce Savoline was pleased with the report, which suggested Oakville Trafalgar Hospital and Milton District Hospital be merged. In addition Georgetown's hospital will be merged into a hospital

cluster including Brampton and Etobicoke.
 "Halton will do very well. There will be a large reinvestment of provincial dollars in Halton and other growth areas," she said. "We are very fortunate. This is a good news story for Halton."
 Ms Savoline said there is some concern among those who work at area hospitals that a potential merger will mean cutbacks. She explained a merger does not mean that services will be reduced. In fact the report suggests there will



Joyce Savoline

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