

have been a lot of improvements at Canada Post since Mr. Landers took over. Over the last two years the volume of work mail has increased by 6.8 per cent while the number of employees has decreased by over 2,000 at a savings in excess of \$60 million. This represents an efficiency improvement of 7.5 per cent. During the same period the over-all efficiency of the service sector in Canada increased by only 2 per cent.

Since 1984, 206,000 homes and businesses, a number equivalent to a city the size of Ottawa, were provided with service using 750 fewer people. That is efficiency. This represents an address growth of 2 per cent with 4 per cent fewer delivery people. We must all act in a responsible manner. If we are going to restore door-to-door mail delivery for all of these homes we will have to discuss the cost.

One of the issues that has been discussed in the Government Operations Committee is declaring Canada Post an essential service. We have heard from many witnesses over the last two years that they could not survive another strike. Dozens of small businesses have had to close down. They just cannot afford another strike. We have seen the evidence.

I have recommended to the committee that we get quotes from the private sector for delivering mail in the new urban areas which are serviced by the supermailboxes. That is an alternative which I have offered. It costs \$25 an hour to put a postman on the route. If we want to have postmen in all these areas we will have to discuss the cost.

Is the Leader of the Opposition proposing that we borrow money or that we have a 50-cent or 60-cent stamp to pay for the additional cost of door-to-door delivery? He has a responsibility to tell us what he wants done. Does he want us to borrow the money and have a bigger deficit, or does he want us to increase the price of stamps to pay for the door-to-door delivery he has requested?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has not recognized the fundamental thesis I was advancing, which is that Canadians are entitled to equal postal service for the 36 cents they pay for a stamp. It is the Government's responsibility, through the Post Office, to improve services and labour-management relations, to widen the variety of services available through the Post Office, and to balance the books through improved service and not by cutting service, potentially at the expense of two million second-class Canadian citizens, and that will be the result of the Government's practice.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the support of the Leader of the Official Opposition for door-to-door delivery. I heard what the Member on the government side said with regard to costs. The adoption by the Liberal Party of the policy of door-to-door delivery is different than its policy was when it was in office. Are the Liberals now also prepared to enable the Post Office to be involved in revenue-generating activities? This is a strategy for solving the problem of costs which the Government has failed to examine and pursue. In fact, when the Liberals were in office they failed to pursue that as well.

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Does this new Liberal thinking involve not only fairness in terms of door-to-door delivery, but also a realistic look at revenue-generating activities for the Post Office so that we can balance the books while delivering service?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, in our meeting with the postal unions we said that we were quite willing to look at constructive ways of widening the range of postal service in an imaginative, revenue-producing way.

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, I have a brief question. I am interested in the so-called Liberal doctrine of fairness and equity in terms of access to the service of the Post Office and the cost. The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) knows that not all people live in Vancouver Quadra or Rockcliffe. If the Liberals have that kind of doctrine, why is it that all Canadians who live in rural areas and have to pick up their mail in rural post offices are required to pay a fee for maintaining a box in addition to the expense of having to drive to the Post Office to pick up their mail, often in 40-degree below temperatures?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman who lives in Prince George in the constituency which he represents, he will know that I am speaking for people in his area too when I ask for better service. Surely he does not deny that the quality of service should be a main-spring of the postal commitment to the country.

Without being overly critical, I must say that it takes 14 days for a letter to be delivered from Vancouver Quadra to the House of Commons in Ottawa. I do not know whether he receives any better service in Prince George, but when I am up there later in the summer I will travel some of the rural routes with him. We will see what his own constituents want. I think he will be convinced of the argument I am making.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I know the right hon. gentleman has developed a sizable reputation for his involvement in business. He has been on the board of directors of a number of corporations. I suspect that during those days corporations were going through what we now call down-sizing because of increased expenses and reduced cash flow. In view of his experience in the private sector, how would he advise the corporation, which one might say is bankrupt every year since it needs a cash infusion from taxpayers, to expand its services in the way in which he asks it to?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): The experience I had in business indicates to me that if you want to balance the books of the business or increase its profit potential you do not cut its main product.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my formal remarks I would like to comment on some of the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition. He says "do not cut the deficit". He says, "above all, meet the demands of the Opposition first and foremost". He implies that we should not worry about the