

Government Organization

Mr. Perrault: I will answer your question. The suggestion is, I believe, that there should be no subsidy whatever. I then suggested that there would be a continuing subsidy, something like \$40 million in the next fiscal year. That answered the hon. member's question, and he should have been listening. Of course, I support the measure—

• (9:50 p.m.)

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Perrault: —but not unlimited deficits,—

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Perrault: —for the taxpayers of Canada.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. We are discussing the establishment of a new department, not policy of the department or the cost of handling mail.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, with all due deference to you, I know the minister has flights of imagination in connection with satellites and so on, but whether the minister likes it or not this department of communications will have to administer that old warhorse, the post office.

The Post Office Department has set rates for various types of mail that it delivers. We have listened to a lecture from the No. 1 defender of this government, the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour, who believes in constructive criticism. However, since he has been in this chamber I have never heard, and I venture to guess that I never will hear in the few years that he will be here, any criticism voiced by any member of the opposition that the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour considered to be constructive.

Mr. Perrault: You are absent from the house too much and do not hear these things.

Mr. Orlikow: As far as absence from the house is concerned, I will stake my record against yours.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The hon. member should be given the opportunity to make his remarks. I ask the hon. member to come back to the part of the bill we are discussing, namely clause 7, the establishment of the new department. If the hon. member can relate his remarks to clause 7, I should be very pleased to hear him do so.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, first of all, clause 12 of the bill, on page 4, deals with the Post Office Department.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I would bring to the attention of the hon. member that the committee is discussing clause 7, on page 2 of the bill.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Chairman, it was agreed when we started debating this bill that on each of the several parts of the bill we would on the first clause again have a general discussion of the whole part. I submit that we are now on the part dealing with the communications department, which does include the Post Office Department.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I understand the hon. member and I thank him for his advice. Clause 12, to which the hon. member for Winnipeg North referred, reads as follows:

Section 3 of the Post Office Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"3. (1) There shall be a department of the Government of Canada called the Post Office Department over which the Postmaster General shall preside.

(2) The Minister of Communications is the Postmaster General and has the management and direction of the Post Office Department."

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, that is precisely what we are discussing. I am not asking for any special consideration. The hon. member for Brandon-Souris made two speeches on this clause dealing with the effects on Canadian publications of increases in the postal rates, and you permitted him to speak. Then, the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour started to berate the hon. member for Brandon-Souris and other members for not being constructive. "Of course there have to be increases in postal rates", says the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour. Then I asked the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour, if there did have to be increases in postal rates, whether the government would continue to subsidize farm publications that are going out of business, the ethnic press which is going out of business and labour union publications, such as the C.N.T.U. magazine of which the minister of economic expansion was president for so long, and which has suspended publication.

If the government cannot then does the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour think it fair that the Canadian taxpayer should subsidize *Time* and *Reader's Digest* to the tune of