

Edward Island—another victory for the so-called “rationalization” of services, and a defeat for the real needs of real people and real communities. One is reminded of the false promises made in July, 1981, by the same Minister of Transport about the glorious new investment in transcontinental passenger equipment that the VIA cutbacks would make possible. Instead, existing transcontinental passenger equipment and service have been allowed to deteriorate, and no new investment in this kind of equipment has been made. VIA continues to preside over the death of passenger train service.

One can only hope, Madam Speaker, that it is not too late for the Government to show some enlightened leadership for a change when it comes to rail policy. The Minister could redeem himself by cancelling the lay-offs, by cancelling the abandonment of lines in P.E.I., by keeping the promises he made about transcontinental passenger service in 1981, and by adopting the NDP proposals on the Crow which would give us even more jobs without making an already struggling farm community pay for them, and without endangering a way of life on the Prairies.

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#### ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

##### LOCKAGE FEES IMPOSED ON SMALL COMMERCIAL VESSELS

**Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines):** Madam Speaker, the very existence of 40 or more communities having ports on the shores of the Great Lakes and which cannot be serviced by full-sized vessels is being jeopardized. The St. Lawrence Seaway Authority initiated a policy to discourage the use of smaller ships using the Welland Canal, and imposed a lockage fee for such smaller commercial vessels which amounted to five times the rate for full-sized ships. This lockage fee, initiated in 1982 and doubled for the 1983 season, will, as the Seaway Authority intends, add an additional \$3,500 to the round-trip cost of using the Welland Canal, and put many commercial shipping interests out of business.

Many shippers using larger vessels are dependent on the supply delivery of these small commercial vessels, and one port after another which cannot handle such larger vessels will close down, throwing more people out of work, and allowing ships and facilities to rot and depreciate—all of this following a disastrous shipping season when every advantage and opportunity is required, and when there is no pressing demand to increase the capacity of the Welland Canal. Maybe the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) will encourage the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority to take a second look at this unwarranted surcharge.

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#### THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

**Mr. David Smith (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, an article in today's *Globe and Mail* states that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen) has distributed a speech to residents of his constituency in which he endorses remarks made by the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington). In a constituency report he repeats a statement made by the Hon. Member for Capilano, which says:

Has it occurred to you that the capitalist system is being buried under the advancing forces of world socialism; that world leaders of these socialist forces are in control of the Canadian Government; that the hangman's knot for Uncle Sam's neck is being made in Canada—

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Smith:** Madam Speaker, I think it is important to point out to the Leader of the Opposition that surely we have reached the time where we have sufficient political maturity in this country that we can have our differences without making such misleading statements, which are divisive and untrue.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Smith:** Madam Speaker, we on this side of the House believe in social justice within a free enterprise system; we believe in initiative and the work ethic; and we will stand up for it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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• (1410)

#### CANADA POST CORPORATION

##### DELAYS IN MAIL DELIVERY

**Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie):** Madam Speaker, recently I read a report from the Post Office outlining how great their service was and what a large percentage of letters get through on time. It is interesting that there was a flurry of advertising and reports indicating how well Canada Post was performing, just before the postage increases today.

Coincidentally, I received several letters from constituents which dampened my enthusiasm. In one letter from Fort Erie, a woman pointed out the amount of time letters took to arrive from various destinations to her home. A letter from Japan arrived in only eight days, while a letter from Buffalo, N.Y., just five miles away, took ten days, and a letter from Montreal took 19 days. In another letter a gentleman from Smithville pointed out to me that a cheque for a considerable sum had been mailed from Nova Scotia 21 days before its arrival in that town. In the interim, the payee lost over \$400 interest.

I submit that, in the light of the current cost of mailing a letter, the postal administration must endeavour to provide more efficient service and to eliminate costly and useless advertising.