

Government Organization

as the postal services. Scarcely a word has been spoken about the communication satellite. Scarcely a word has been said about the future of educational television, even in its technical aspects. Not a word has been said about the fact that in the bill before us there is the possibility of the emergence of one of the greatest government departments in our history.

There has been no discussion of methods by which we can improve communications to the northland beyond the use of the postal services. Opposition members have been content to rake over the cold embers of political acrimony. One really suspects they would like to append a footnote to each of their speeches: Local papers, please copy. Their speeches have been designed for maximum publicity on the home front, not really as a constructive contribution to the dialogue.

Mr. MacInnis: A point of order, Mr. Chairman, arises from the remarks made by the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour which, beyond any question or doubt impute motives to others who have participated in the debate.

Mr. Basford: Don't be so sensitive.

Mr. Perrault: These are comments from an hon. member who has never shown any sensitivity for the feelings of others in this house.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Chairman, when a member of this house raises a point of order it follows that the Chair should rule whether or not the point of order raised is a legitimate one.

I shall be satisfied with the judgment of the Chair, if I am told that my point of order is not a legitimate one. And I will be further satisfied if the minister would have the intestinal fortitude to get up and take part in the debate—

The Deputy Chairman: I do not think there is any point of order.

Mr. MacInnis: I rise once again on a point of order. It arises, now, from the ruling the Chair has just made. I shall raise the matter tomorrow, when Mr. Speaker is in the chair, as a question of privilege.

Mr. Perrault: I do not wish to continue much longer because I want to give others in this chamber an opportunity to take part in the debate. So many of those who have risen today to say that their freedom of speech is being restricted have taken 12 minutes of a 20

[Mr. Perrault.]

minute speech in which to make their point. Once again, one wonders how interested members of the opposition really are in speaking constructively about this new government department.

I want to say that it takes courage to advance legislation of this kind. It is always unpopular to do the difficult things in government but we have a minister here at last who has the courage to look closely at the operations of the post office, something which was not done with courage by some of the previous administrations in this country, including the administration formed by the party to my left. The minister saw this was an intolerable situation and one which could not continue. He said: It will be necessary to make tough decisions and certain jobs will be affected, but we will try to be fair about it. I say to members on the opposition side: Let them be fair in the comments they make on the subject before us.

Mr. Orlikow: Would the hon. member tell this committee whether he thinks it is fair that the people of Canada who, he says, cannot afford to subsidize the various Canadian newspapers and magazines, should continue to subsidize *Time* and *Readers' Digest* under the new rates to the tune of \$1,500,000 a year?

Mr. Perrault: If the hon. member had done any research on the subject of postal rates, and obviously he has not, he would know that even with the change contemplated an enormous deficit will still have to be borne by the Canadian taxpayer in connection with the operations of the post office. There is no chance whatever that in the forthcoming fiscal year or two there will be a breakthrough. This is a holding operation. Costs were getting out of line and I would think that a party which is so interested in programs for spending the taxpayers' money would at least show a degree of responsibility in helping to hold the line.

Mr. Orlikow: The hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour does not want to answer my question and, of course, he is not bound to do so. I asked him a simple question. The figures will show—

The Deputy Chairman: I would ask the committee to come back to the bill.

Mr. Orlikow: Surely, Mr. Chairman, we are discussing the bill—the question of communications. The hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour has criticized us—