

Postal Services Continuation Act, 1987

pay 36 cents to send a letter from Ottawa to Yellowknife. If we want to give all Canadians the same service, we will have to let Canada Post raise income some other way and get organized to provide a better service, and it should also have the means to finance that service if the Government does not want to pay the cost. As for me, I agree that we have to reduce the deficit, but we should let the Canada Post Corporation manage its own affairs.

In 1984, the Canada Post Corporation took action to increase its revenue by developing a service called Consumer Post. In this case, the Conservative Party went against the private sector. It said: You are in competition with the private sector. On the other hand, in England, the Post Office has a service called Floral Post for sending flowers. Does this service compete against the private sector? You cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. I have nothing against the Canada Post Corporation organizing its own activities, but we should also give it the power to manage the postal service so as to provide essential services and make a profit. In fact, Canada Post has been told that it will not receive one penny after March 31, 1988, and that it will still have to see to it that its books are balanced, whatever happens to the service. This is what is going on now, Mr. Speaker. There have been cutbacks in delivery services, rural post offices are about to be closed, and now, the whole postal service will be split up. I also have small post offices in my constituency. These are all open at different hours. The Minister gave me a list one day showing post offices which stayed open between 9 and midnight. I will not say what I think of this, but it is certainly not true. I called them one after another, and some of them stay open between 9 and 5, other between 9 and 12, and some are open while others stay closed on Saturdays. We must have a credible service of some kind, Mr. Speaker. In my opinion, if we had kept to the mandate which had been given to the Canada Post Corporation in 1981, we would have succeeded. This is what the Marchment Report says in recommendation 10, that Canada Post will succeed if given another five years, and if it does not, a method to privatize the Corporation will be found. I personally agree with this recommendation of the Marchment Report which was rejected by the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments. The Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) has the floor.

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Saint-Léonard—Anjou (Mr. Gagliano) has the ability to take bits of information and to interpret them as he pleases. First of all, he started by asking how did we come this far? Then he went back to 1981. As a matter of fact, he was well advised to stop in 1981, because if he had gone further in the past, he would have had to mention the whole series of labour disputes the Canada Post Corporation was involved in. And then his was the governing party.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to remind my hon. friend that in 1978, his party did adopt a similar legislation, which also in 1980 landed the president of the inside postal workers in

jail. The Canada Post Corporation was established by the Liberals in 1981 and, as any seriously handicapped "creature" from the start, it has a lot of difficulty living a normal life. And he quoted of course the Marchment Report; by the way, I should like to remind him that this is not a report prepared by the Government or a Government agency. Marchment was the name of a committee which had been established to examine the role and productivity of the Canada Post Corporation. Personally, I would rather deal with the very last report prepared by Kenneth Swan. According to the conciliator appointed in the dispute between the Corporation and the Union of Postal Workers the relations between the party representatives had deteriorated to the point of becoming personal and acrimonious.

Such is your creature. So were the special legislation you adopted then and which resulted in a person going to jail better than this legislation aimed at averting violence on the picket lines?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has again failed to listen to what I said and, at the beginning, I went further back than in 1981. As you can see, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): When the Hon. Member rose a while ago to reply to the Hon. Member for Duvernay (Mr. Della Noce), he said exactly the same thing. He accused him of not listening. He was, perhaps, the only one listening, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, according to those Members it would seem we are not entitled to have our own views nor to rise in this House. Fortunately, he is not the Speaker, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Côté (Lac Saint-Jean): Answer the question!

Mr. Gagliano: First, I went back before 1981 and I said indeed that in the 1960's—I went back a good many years, he should have listened, I went as far back as the 1960's—and I said we had . . .

Well if you are not listening, look I am not to be blamed, but I said indeed that we had so many conflicts in that area, and for that reason in 1981, in order to put an end to those conflicts and get them out of the Government machinery, we established the Canada Post Corporation, Mr. Speaker. Had he listened, he would have known.

Second, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member suggested this is not a Government report. If he had taken the time to read the report, he would have seen indeed that it was the former Minister in charge of Canada Post (Mr. Beatty), the now Minister of National Defence, who issued that madate, and then the Marchment Committee submitted its report to the former minister responsible for Canada Post, because it must be emphasized that during those three years we have already