

Post Office Act

of about \$1½ million a year. Most of this represents a profit. Because of this one might be led to suggest that we should be turning out some of the most attractive stamps that could be made. I am sorry to say, however, that Canadian stamps do not compare with those of other countries. Take a look at the stamps of Jamaica, Antigua or some of the other Caribbean countries. These are beautiful stamps with clear and crisp colours, and a pleasing photograph. They are real treasures for anybody who is in the business of collecting stamps. I believe the Post Office Department could do a better job in the production of stamps, and I am sure that the philatelic branch will be imbued with the zest and zeal of our new Postmaster General, so that we will have some of the best looking stamps in the world. I see no reason why Canada should not have stamps that are as attractive as any in the world.

Finally, I should like to say that I am opposed to this very important bill being passed until it has been considered by a committee. I am also opposed to the principle of increasing charges and reducing services. It is not good business, nor can I understand why anyone would wish to do it. I am sorry the bill has not been introduced in another form. I would like to see the post office become a crown corporation.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, we are now discussing the Post Office bill and, in my opinion, this discussion is taking a very interesting direction, to judge from the speeches made these last few days. In fact, the majority of the members are blaming the government for putting the cart before the horse.

Mr. Speaker, let us refer this bill to a committee. The minister already said some time ago that a group of experts of his department are studying the reorganization of the Post Office Department and rethinking completely the structure of that department, in case it were to become a crown corporation. If this measure is passed, it will render our discussion and this bill absolutely worthless, since the whole concept of mail service in Canada would be completely changed.

Mr. Speaker, the minister would like us to pass his Post Office bill in a hurry, before we learn the results of this study. I find the attitude of the minister rather strange; he is putting the cart before the horse and serving interests other than those of the Canadian people, since, if this bill is passed, the cost to

the Canadian people will be increased, without knowing whether another study may not be undertaken in a year or in two or three years to determine whether or not the Post Office Department is to become a crown corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the matter is serious indeed. With regard to the possibility of the Post Office Department becoming a crown corporation, I tried to obtain some information on the subject recently, but the minister did not answer when I asked him whether experts are really studying this matter. I would like the minister to confirm it now, since the question was declared out of order on October 22, as may be seen from page 1647 of *Hansard*. I therefore ask the minister again to tell us whether studies are really being conducted at this time, in order to ensure that this bill has a solid base.

Mr. Speaker, an article published in the newspaper *Le Devoir* dated May 23, 1967, reported as follows:

President Lyndon Johnson set up a special commission to study the reorganization of the U.S. Post Office Department and its eventual replacement by a government corporation.

We see the same conclusions, the same evolution, in many countries.

Here, in Canada, we had the Anderson report in 1965. The same article also mentioned this report, and I quote:

In his report dated September 27, 1965, Judge Anderson made the following comments: "While I was trying—

Here comes the interesting part.

"While I was trying to determine whether the postal employees' salaries were fair and reasonable, I began to ask myself whether it might not be indicated, in order to ensure better postal services in Canada and to meet the needs of the people who operate it, to hand over its administration to a Crown corporation."

Judge Anderson goes on to give the arguments in favour of turning the Canada Post Office into a Crown corporation:

1. Postal employees constitute a distinct and homogeneous group; they would readily constitute an appropriate negotiating group.

2. The postal service earns the major part of the income used to pay its employees.

3. Postal employees are, for the most part, semi-skilled workers and because of this there is great similarity between their group and labour unions in industry.

● (4:20 p.m.)

Judge Anderson continues his eight-point demonstration to prove beyond a doubt that the problem in the Post Office Department is not one of deficit but one requiring the reorganization of its whole structure.