

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

should like to quote this report in part. The headline reads: "Poor Habits Delay Mail".

Mail delivery delays here have been caused by staffing problems, misleading date times and mis-sorting, Postmaster Doug Layton told the Chamber of Commerce Monday.

"The staff here is not the best," he charged, "but they have not slowed down since the strike as they have in big cities like Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto."

Any reasonable individual would wonder what might prompt Mr. Layton to publicly make a statement so provocative and so contemptuous of the people who are his subordinates. Was he trying to defend himself from the blistering criticism of the postal service so familiar to the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) himself? Was he attempting to ingratiate himself with the local wheels in the chamber of commerce? I do not know what his motives were. Maybe he doesn't know himself. All I know is that he engaged in singularly unenlightened management practices and cast a shadow on all the postal workers, offending them and insulting them in general, whether they were guilty or not, in and before the community in which they work.

Naturally, there was an immediate reaction from the slandered workers concerned. A meeting with the postmaster was demanded and on May 6 and 7 the following exchange took place as reported to the C.U.P.W. by the local president, Mr. Sangha. I have tabled the whole letter, but in the interest of brevity I will read only the last two paragraphs:

The Postmaster did not deny that he was misquoted by the reporter. A suggestion to have a meeting with the Chief Editor and the Reporter and have us as observers was apparently rejected. Finally, we demanded a complete retraction or correction by 3.30 on May 7th, 1969 so that the whole matter can be referred to the District or National Office for the necessary action. Nothing came out of this demand, but consequently in today's *Daily News* the attached "Letter to the Editor" has appeared. If you examine the wording close enough you might find out why we are still completely dissatisfied and mad.

Since you are fully aware of our daily abnormal situation in this particular Post Office, and the inhuman attitude of the Postmaster towards all the employees, we hope the National Office will institute the necessary action in order to clear up and resolve our past, present and the future problems.

The following is the complete text of a letter which appeared in the *Daily News* of May 8:

A recent report on a talk I gave to the Chamber of Commerce has perhaps cast a rather poor reflection on the local Post Office staff.

[Mr. Rose.]

It was not my intent to do this and I rather resent when local or federal Post Office employees are criticized collectively for incidents over which they have no control.

Unfortunately, locally due to such a high staff turnover for various reasons we have been forced to use partially and untrained staff on many occasions. This has caused some internal problems but I hope few external problems.

Should you the Public have complaints about the service or the service given by postal employees then I expect you to make them known to me so that these may be cleared up when it is possible to do so.

D. B. Layton
Postmaster

I suggest in all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons for the "high staff turnover" and the "untrained staff" referred to is the rigid, inflexible, even medieval attitude and management practices of the local postmaster himself. Something should be done about this immediately, because in this case control rests undeniably with the minister himself. Some time before May 12 the Postmaster had an automatic recording device installed on the receiver of the only phone in that post office in order to monitor all incoming and outgoing calls. Incidentally, this is the only phone in the office, and the office remained locked this afternoon. Did the Postmaster General authorize this delightful innovation? Did the British Columbia director authorize it? I think not. I think that this was the brainchild of a narrow minded local boss who, not being content to vilify his employees in public, now wants to spy on them in private.

• (10:20 p.m.)

The standing committee on justice and legal affairs has recently had before it four bills concerned with wiretapping and devices for eavesdropping, spying and invading privacy, to the revulsion, I think, of most members of parliament. This is done—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I am rather surprised that the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose) rose in the house today because I was under the impression, having discussed the matter with him last evening, that he was going to give me time to investigate some correspondence he had shown me last night. We are now faced with the situation where a man in Prince Rupert, who cannot defend himself here, has been accused—