

Post Office

being the first country to go all "up" with regard to first-class mail, whenever such carriage would speed its delivery. This brings me to another question.

I think this House increasingly has become trapped in the philosophy enunciated and proclaimed, as it were, in the preamble to the National Transportation Act. Overwhelming emphasis is put on the idea of user service charges. I make this comment in view of the remarks of the hon. member for South Western Nova (Mr. Haliburton) who spoke about subsidizing the postal service. My reaction, having listened to this sort of debate when members of the official opposition were on the other side of the House, as well as on other occasions, is that that remark shows the kind of trap into which Liberal and Conservative members have fallen. When they think of transportation, the Post Office, or mail delivery, they do not think of these things in terms of public utilities and services.

Mr. Yewchuk: I talked about transportation.

Mr. Barnett: They keep harping back to the same theme, that somehow the Post Office or the transport system is essentially competitive in nature and is part and parcel of what they like to call the free enterprise economy and similar in principle, although different in operation, to other aspects of the free enterprise economy, such as a multiple number of retail outlets or a multiple number of plants making lumber. That is why some of the criticism I have heard about the postal service seem to me artificial and shallow.

The Postmaster General, perhaps as a result of circumstances, is playing a rather low-key role. Some of our debates on this topic may have been more exciting a few years ago when one of his predecessors was in office. I would bring to his attention and ask him to look at the preamble to the National Transportation Act which was piloted through this House by the former member for Bonavista-Twillingate who was later elevated to a position from which he could oversee our transportation systems. Then he might examine some of the day to day problems relating to the effective and efficient delivery of mail. Then if he will take a little time to think about it, he may be able to exert pressure on the thinking of his colleagues in the government in a way which may help to resolve some of the problems that many of us mention to him from day to day. In some ways they have become more severe and in other ways, perhaps, there have been improvements.

I think there has been overemphasis on technology in urban centres because many areas of the country are still in the horse-and-buggy days. I think I only need mention, in closing, some of the representations he has been receiving from revenue postmasters to indicate what is in the back of my mind.

Mr. Speaker, may I call it five o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It being five o'clock it is my duty to inform this House that, pursuant to Section (11) of Standing Order 58, the proceedings on this motion are deemed to have expired and terminated. This House stands adjourned until two o'clock Monday afternoon.

At 5.01 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.

END OF VOLUME IV