

*Post Office*

being achieved under very responsible leadership by the LCUC can be achieved, also, with respect to the Canadian Union of Postal Workers provided there is a deliberate and concerted attempt to indicate that management will deal with some of the fundamental problems and criticisms. The Postmaster General has an opportunity to accomplish that, because negotiations are currently going forward. This is a golden opportunity.

Because of the mixed-up state of affairs in the Post Office Department by reason of the failure of the government to recognize it as an important industry, the Postmaster General has been unable to come to grips with the continuing labour problems. The mixed-up state of affairs in that department brings together the following: the Treasury Board to handle wage negotiations, Public Works to handle deaccommodation, and Labour to handle labour problems. Even Supply and Services gets into the act on mechanization. Post offices in other democratic countries have had to face the same problems confronting Canada today. While they have raised postal rates because inflationary circumstances demanded that post offices have some increase in revenue, they have also made fundamental changes in administration. This has taken place in the United Kingdom, the United States and West Germany where management, labour and the postal users are working together for an efficient, modern postal service.

These groups must sit down together. The process of Com-team communications is not enough. There must be co-determination, and they must sit around a table face to face. There must be personal confidence established between the individuals taking part in the dialogue. The process of co-determination must be used to make decisions for resolving postal problems. They must sit down together in order to resolve some of the problems referred to by the Postmaster General. This is industrial democracy that will be required to overcome the problems of Canada's postal service.

Finally, I should like to strongly emphasize that the Postmaster General is making a fundamental mistake—which I am sure he realizes—by arbitrarily announcing substantial increases in postal rates. He has indicated that we have been given ample warning and by April 1 the users will have overcome the shock. By this time he should realize that there will be the usual protests from small businessmen, book publishers, senior citizens and other Canadians who are totally dependent upon a postal service at reasonable rates.

The Postmaster General has failed to go through the basic consultative process that is necessary to prepare for a development of this kind. I will be kept busy in the next weeks dealing with publishers and independent businessmen in an attempt to explain what makes the Postmaster General tick, which is a difficult job for a member of the official opposition. What the government is doing is illegal, as was indicated by the Standing Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments last May 11.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** I would inform the hon. member for Brandon-Souris that the hon. Postmaster General

took 14 minutes, and the hon. member has exceeded that time. When will the hon. member close his remarks?

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Speaker, I am in my final paragraph. Your Honour has a very good sense of timing in realizing that I was coming to the climax.

It is illegal, as was pointed out by a standing committee of the House of Commons. Last May 18 we asked the Postmaster General to refer the issue to the Supreme Court for a definite opinion. Today I ask him, once again, to defer the proposed increases until the Supreme Court has expressed itself on the matter and the necessary amendments to the Post Office Act can be brought in. On this issue, surely the government can operate within the law.

● (1552)

**Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to express my dissatisfaction with the fact that although, apparently, the Postmaster General mailed the text of his remarks this afternoon to my leader and to my House leader, as of now we have not yet received a copy. I think that to use the mail service to deliver copies of documents to members is doing a disservice to members. This has been the case so far as our party is concerned.

There is certainly no doubt in the minds of Canadians that something is wrong in the postal service of Canada, and I am glad to see that the minister has at least put his finger on the problem in the following statement as it appears on page 4 of this borrowed text of the minister's speech: "Of course, the most important elements in this equation are the postal people. To make mechanization work and to maintain consistently high levels of service, we need full co-operation from all postal employees and their unions who must share in any gains achieved by mechanization."

There is no Canadian who is not fully aware of the fact that something is wrong in the state of Denmark. Surely the minister has heard it stated often enough in this country that the whole question of mechanization within the Post Office has created a great many problems for those workers who are directly affected by it, namely, members of the Canadian Union of Postal Employees. This dissatisfaction with technological change in the Post Office has led to wildcat strikes and to lengthy strikes.

When the previous postmaster general, Bryce Mackasey, brought in the same goals as are in the Canada Labour Code into the contract with the postal employees, he said the government had the answer. Obviously, we do not have the answer because we are still bogged down with the same problems in honouring that clause in the contract, namely, clause 127. The Post Office management is still trying to run around the ends of the very clause they put in to eliminate problems with respect to technological change.

So the people of this country are fully aware of the fact that there are management-employee problems. Even though the Postmaster General said, on taking office, that he does not know much about industrial relations and negotiations, very