

commend him for the manner in which he is looking at every problem in an attempt to solve them one by one. If the chain of command and responsibility at the local level are put together, I believe there will be a tremendous improvement in the Post Office in very short order.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the minister and his department. I am pleased with his change of style in that he is attempting to respond fully to questions raised by various members, which I am sure the House appreciates. I should like him to know that.

My original intention was to say that the cabinet indicates that all the red Tories occupy the front benches and that all the prehistoric reactionary ones are in the back benches, but I realized that I was forgetting about the finance portfolio and could not make such a statement.

Some members urge an abandonment of the revolving door postmaster generalship and at the same time wish the minister greater longevity in his portfolio. That ignores the possibility when the Post Office is turned into a Crown corporation that there will not be the position of Postmaster General. Perhaps there will be someone in the House answering for Crown corporations, and the title "Postmaster General" will become part of our history. Members on this side will be pleased about that because we believe, as do the unions and other political parties, that perhaps the establishment of Crown corporations will result in a solution of some of the problems and will overcome the limitations in the current Public Service Staff Relations Act. Perhaps it will allow access to better breaks in terms of labour legislation and other matters. I am not debating that at the moment, but it is somewhat contradictory to wish the minister a long and happy life in his portfolio and to wish for an early start on Crown corporation legislation.

Someone mentioned the schizophrenia relating to the joint portfolios of Postmaster General and Minister of the Environment, but I think it was a very shrewd move on the part of the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark). As Postmaster General the minister can be in charge of distributing all the litter, and as Minister of the Environment he has responsibility for cleaning it up.

Someone mentioned that essentially the Post Office is a service, and I think a lot of members would agree. Also I think the minister mentioned that he was proud of the reduction in the deficit.

Mr. Benjamin: The deficit is being reduced by a reduction of service.

Mr. Rose: The government is reducing the deficit by reducing not only services, but by increasing the first class letter rate. Perhaps it could be justified, but equivalent increases should be applied to the other classes of mail. Many of the second and third class pieces of mail are flyers that are distributed by businessmen.

Mr. Rodriguez: And members of Parliament.

Postal Rates

Mr. Rose: Yes, members of Parliament. I am not suggesting that these classes should be cut. God knows, we are inundated daily with business flyers and the like. Perhaps they should be subsidized to some extent, because they provide people with an opportunity to comparison shop in their homes. But I think second and third class mails should bear their share of increases in an attempt to reduce the deficit. We should not restrain ourselves right out of the post office business. Second and third class mail should bear equivalent cost increases, depending on the proportion of the post office costs they represent. The first class rate has been increased on two occasions in the last year. Perhaps I am wrong in that comment, but that is my recollection.

In conclusion, I should like to indicate that someone seems to be in doubt about the exact percentage of votes accorded to the government in the election results of May 22. I think the government has done exceedingly well, because with 36 per cent of the vote it achieved nearly half the seats, whereas our party got 18 per cent of the votes and 9 per cent of the seats. If that is not a call for proportional representation in the House, I do not know what is.

Mr. Blenkarn: There are too many of you as it is.

Mr. Rose: Someone is suggesting that there are too many of us. I hope that is not an example of Conservative arrogance. Regardless whether the hon. member opposite likes it or not, the people put us here.

Mr. Blenkarn: The people put me here as well.

[Translation]

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, after spending a few hours listening to the remarks about the Postmaster General (Mr. Fraser) and, in the final analysis, the congratulations extended to the Messiah-minister, to the miracle worker Postmaster General, and also while waiting for my friend for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) to address us a few last words in French, probably to bring the debate to a close, I think I should merely like to say that I listened very closely to the advice the Postmaster General got from the New Democratic Party.

I also took good note of the answers of the minister, and I can assure hon. members that they will be pinned up in my office; every time his intentions are transformed into actions and results, I shall be very pleased to cross them out, to show that the problem has been solved. I do not particularly want to congratulate the Postmaster General because, in a sense, that is his work, his responsibility and I know what responsibility that is; all I hope is that next year, when he tables his annual report for 1979-80, it will show that the year has been as efficient and productive as was the one of which we gave an account in our own last report.

[English]

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.