

Government Orders

This bill is a sham and a joke. That it is even before us is a pathetic comment on the declining mental fortunes of the government opposite.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): We have adjacent ridings, as you know, Mr. Speaker, so you will be kind to both of us, I am sure.

Does the member recall the cartoon in the 1964 election campaign when Senator Goldwater was running for president? They had a picture of him looking quite surprised and the caption was: "But Senator Goldwater, don't you recall that the government has always carried the mail?" These people want to have the government stop carrying the mail. They want their friends in the business community to carry the mail.

It is true that some of the people who carry mail are Liberals. The member from the back row over there who used to be a free enterpriser would doubtless like the *Toronto Sun* to carry the mail. The *Toronto Sun* is not going to carry the mail because there are a lot of people who have a lot of their lives, their effort, their sweat tied up in carrying the mail and they do a good job. They even deliver mail in the riding of the hon. member for Calgary Southeast until the next election. I was there last week speaking at a Liberal meeting. He will be happy to know there are lots of people there who are going to run against the member.

• (1430)

The really good news is that three people at the meeting were individuals who had been on the member's executive for Calgary Southwest until very recently. I would call that a switch.

Mr. Richardson: Were you a free enterpriser?

Mr. Kilgour: I got them stirred up Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the hon. member opposite is not commenting on the speeches that have just been delivered or addressing a question to any topic that the member covered.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): This is comment period. He has a little comment period and then he can address his question.

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, I have spent a lot of time with people who work for the post office in Edmonton too. Will the member tell us whether he thinks that on a balance of probabilities the fault is more with the

management of the post office than it is somewhere else?

I have the feeling that the problem is mostly a management one. I have here a letter from a lady which took 12 days to arrive. I would be, and other members too would be interested in hearing whether the member thinks we can build bridges between people who work for the post office and management? How can we get more happy campers in the post office, more happy employees?

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, I must thank the hon. member for Edmonton Southeast very much for that question. The answer is a remarkably simple one.

First of all, stop resisting the grievances. Clear up the grievance backlog. Send them through the process and get them solved. That is step one.

That is not hard to accomplish. All it takes is a wee bit of will on the part of management. The problem is that for the longest time there has been a stonewall approach to those grievances. Clearing up the grievances would be a tremendous first step.

Second, stop closing the postal stations. Stop slashing away at the work force. As the member may know, the entire northeast quadrant of Edmonton is now without a Canada Post post office. There is none there. With the closure of Station C on White Avenue, the entire southeast quadrant of Edmonton will be without a Canada Post post office, with the consequent losses in jobs and services and the rest of it.

The third point is give the employees who are there now the technological and infrastructural tools they need to do the job. That would make them deliriously happy.

I speak to postal workers regularly. I have a lot of them in my riding and my dark confession is that some of my best friends are postal workers.

What they tell me over and over again is that they cannot provide the service that they want to provide because they are not granted the technological means to do so. That would be step number three.

Again, step one, clear the grievances; step two, stop the cutback programs; step three, upgrade the technologies so that the workers can provide the service they want to provide.