

Routine Proceedings

Madam Speaker, as you will know because of your vast knowledge of parliamentary matters, that committee deals with a tremendous number of government departments and agencies, everything from Canada Post, which has so mismanaged the postal affairs of this nation, the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the National Capital Commission, the Department of Supply and Services, the Department of Public Works and a number of other agencies.

I want to ask my colleague if he agrees with me that it would be important for Canadians to have the opportunity to see the important work this committee is doing. In addition, I want to raise at this point the matter of the special committee dealing with Bill C-43, the conflict of interest rules. That is a very important committee as well. It deals with the integrity of government. I am sure that Canadians would want to have the opportunity to see this committee as well.

I invite my colleague to respond as to whether he thinks, as I do, that it would be very important for Canadians to avail themselves of the opportunity to see the work done by those two parliamentary committees and others of course.

Mr. Dingwall: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question.

I do not think there is any doubt in my mind or in the minds of Canadians that it would be very advantageous to have senior officials of Canada Post come before a committee to give testimony, not only on the operations of Canada Post but also on the public policy they have been carrying out for the last number of years.

It would be even more interesting to have the president come before the committee and explain on television, so that Canadians could see, the kind of salary this individual receives as well as the kind of bonus this individual receives.

In other words, you lay off workers and you get a big bonus. You shut down post offices, you get a bonus. I think Canadians would like to see the facial expression of that particular president of Canada Post, as well as government members who sit in that committee supporting the closure of rural post offices, the supporting of the substantial bonuses which have been given to Canada Post. You know, some of these bonuses exceed what any

individual would deem to be fair, reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, when there are Canadians who are lined up at food banks across this country.

I say to my colleague that I agree most heartily that that particular committee which he has made reference to is important. It does important work. It is important to have officials of Canada Post and other organizations come before the respective committees and give testimony in front of the members. It ought to be broadcast so that we can all see that there will be no doubt in terms of the quality of the questions that the opposition members raise, in terms of the support that government members give willingly to the large bonuses and the closing down of rural post offices and the dislocation of jobs, the disruption of communities, et cetera.

I think Canadians would like to see that and I want to thank my hon. colleague for raising that important matter.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I want to join in the debate on this issue this afternoon.

It seems to me that this is a fairly straightforward issue, the matter of broadcasting some committee hearings of the House of Commons.

We support this rather enthusiastically, Madam Speaker, and I want to indicate why. As members of the New Democratic Party, we have had a chance to participate in the discussions.

The one sense that Canadians have generally is a feeling of powerlessness, the fact that there is very little that they can do about a government that is relatively arrogant in almost all policy areas.

I must say that at times all of us as members of Parliament experience a similar feeling, that in spite of the excellent efforts one makes, the government often tends to ignore the proposals, the suggestions, the recommendations, the alternatives and proceeds merrily on its way.

I suppose for the public it is not always clear and Canadians looking in on the operations of the House of Commons, listening to our debate, Question Period and the comments that are made here, get a distorted view of what actually happens in the Parliament of Canada.