

*Postal Service*

Change itself has brought some uncertainty within the Post Office and criticism from without. We have had to cut back some services because they are no longer worth the cost, in much the same way as people now go to supermarkets because they no longer want to pay for the services of the general store. To expect, say, the Post Office to operate on a six-day week when virtually the rest of Canada operates on a five-day week, including members of parliament—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Kierans:** —is much like expecting newspapers in these days of radio and television, still to publish four and five editions a day, or for railways to operate—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the minister but his time has expired.

**Mr. Kierans:** May I have consent to finish?

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** May I suggest the Postmaster General might continue but let him talk facts.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous agreement that the Postmaster General may continue?

**Mr. Aiken:** I merely rise to ask the minister to indicate if he has nearly completed his remarks. I am sure we would not want to cut him off in mid-paragraph.

**Mr. Kierans:** I shall be only another minute.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous agreement?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Kierans:** What we are setting out to do is to provide service in the style of today, to fulfil the real needs of people today, and to do this in a way which does not burden the general taxpayer with expenditures that go only to benefit a few.

I take tremendous pride in being the Postmaster General, and I want every one of the 48,000 people working for the Post Office to have exactly that same feeling of pride. O.K., we are subject to criticism, but we will smile at the people of Canada and they will smile back at us. These are the goals of the Post Office. We are moving toward them and moving at an increasing pace as we identify our problems and take action to solve them. For

[Mr. Kierans.]

that objective I ask for the support and the confidence of this house.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

● (5:00 p.m.)

**Mr. Mac T. McCutcheon (Lambton-Kent):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans), and right at the outset I should like to say that what is going to happen in the Post Office some day is wonderful. But I ask the minister, when is the mail going to go through? Heaven knows, there is enough to be said in criticism of the new broom in the person of the Postmaster General so that I will not have to do what has been suggested should be done, that is, criticize the Post Office Department. There is plenty of room for criticism right at the top. Nothing the minister has said in his remarks today, and I listened to them carefully, has changed my view that one of the main criticisms is his apparent advocacy of the barren and destructive concept of change solely for the sake of change.

To me the minister is the perfect symbol of our sick society, "a prophet of mindless action", to quote the distinguished Cambridge professor of English constitutional history, Geoffrey Elton. Since he assumed office and undertook to reform the Post Office Department and the postal service the minister has managed to alienate postal workers, disrupt service and impose burdensome and unjustified extra taxation on Canadians generally. This I believe is directly attributable to a blind dedication to the theory that change, no matter how unreasoned or how destructive it may be, is bound to be good. I should like to quote from the *Monetary Times* for the month of May, 1969. The minister is reported as having said:

I intend to reshape the Post Office not as an organization in the business of moving the mail, but as an organization in the business of communications.

The minister has embraced the proposed new communications satellite as the justification for his theories and the badge of his new régime. What he has failed to do is explain to Canadian businessmen and others who depend upon a reliable mail service for their daily bread just how his satellite or communications organization will ensure fast, efficient mail delivery, reasonably contented employees or relief from exorbitant charges.

I should like to revert to my earlier remarks about our sick society and mindless