

Postal Service

ter should have tripled the charges on *Time* and *Reader's Digest*, but no, he needs to attack a publication such as the *United Church Observer* to help bring about his reductions.

Canadian *Transport*, normally published twice a month, will now be issued only once in the three months of July, August and September. This is a Canadian, non-profit publication. To add insult to injury, *Postmark*, the publication of employees of his own Post Office Department, has ceased publication. The minister is trying to apply an attitude of efficiency and organization which one usually associates with profit-making organizations. No one objects to efficiency, but the efforts of the minister and the government to apply an attitude of efficiency and money-making in respect of the Post Office, or any other public service essential to the national interest, such as applies to the Montreal Stock Exchange or the "Lovey-Dovey Finance Company" is to deny a fundamental principle that a social enterprise must have as its first priority and its first purpose the provision of service rather than making a profit.

Since when must the Post Office make money? Surely the provision of effective, efficient receipt, handling, dispatch and delivery of communications between Canadians is of such paramount importance that the incurring of deficits for that service is no crime. In fact, the paying of such deficits from the national treasury is surely a proper way for some of the costs of the service to be borne by Canadian citizens and corporations in a manner that has some relationship to ability to pay. In other words, postal deficits can mean that low income people and non-profit organizations will not be carrying a disproportionate share of the costs of a service that is essential to our national well-being and the survival of our culture and independence.

The Post Office is a social as well as a public enterprise. It needs a socialist to run it. The application of free enterprise attitudes and methods to its operations have not allowed, are not now and will not allow in the future, for its efficient and effective operation. We have been experiencing attempts by the government at efficiency for the sake of the internal operations of the department, efficiency for the sake of dollars, in the typical private enterprise way. This has resulted in drastically reduced efficiency in service to the public. It has further resulted in unreasonable and unwarranted hardship being imposed upon publications of non-profit, Canadian organizations and groups.

[Mr. Benjamin.]

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I shall move the amendment which I mentioned earlier. In doing so I would invite members on the back benches on the Liberal side to take this opportunity to get the message through to the minister and the government. I know I cannot ask them to vote against the government and defeat it. However, I ask them to take this opportunity to have at least half a dozen of them vote for the motion and arrange for enough other Liberal members to be absent this evening so that the government will survive by only the skin of its teeth. It may well be that in this event the minister and the government will get the message. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom):

That the motion be amended by inserting therein, immediately after the words "mismanagement of the postal service", the following words:

"including a postal rates policy which seriously threatens the continued existence of church, farmer, labour, co-operative and other non-profit Canadian publications".

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), who has just moved an amendment to the main amendment, said in concluding his remarks that the Communications Department is run as a private enterprise, which explains why its operation is a complete failure.

I must say that if private enterprise was run in the same way as the Communications Department in Ottawa, our trades people and businessmen would have gone bankrupt long ago, because the policy followed in most cases is the same as in other countries where the minister is no longer responsible.

Mr. Speaker, at this stage, I must say that Canada has seldom seen a cabinet minister achieve national unity from sea to sea as totally and as fully as this one.

● (4:10 p.m.)

From East to West, in the central provinces, everywhere, everybody is equally annoyed with the Post Office Department. Mr. Speaker, it is that kind of Canadian unity which we find today, to the same extent, in every field.

The no-confidence motion presented by the official opposition to the effect that the cost and the quality of the postal service are not adequate, is justified.

I somewhat doubt that the motion will even be passed by all the members. I even fear