

### Supply

cannot divulge what they are because we have yet not completed our work, but we do intend to do something, Madam Speaker.

We are looking at the Canada Post Corporation, and in committee Members of this House have expressed concerns and problems about the Corporation. But why not deal with them in an intellectual way and make recommendations? I have told Members and even mentioned to the press that we intend to be a sort of watchdog over this Crown corporation through this committee. Our mandate is to look at the workings of Canada Post Corporation. The mandate does not say that just because we are going to report to the House that we will stop doing that. For the Member for Winnipeg North Centre to suggest everything is all over is wrong. Goodness gracious, Madam Speaker, this is not the intention at all.

Here we are operating under new rules with a new mandate, yet the Member decides that this is an ideal time, the second time, to bring forward a motion to this House on an opposition day concerning Canada Post. I thought when we started today that the New Democrats were going to filibuster again. They brought forth petitions. I know that we should not get too close to those kinds of concerns, Madam Speaker, so let me continue.

There have been problems. Things started with pigeons hauling mail around at one time, if we go back to Galileo days or earlier. No two people from coast to coast in Canada have always received the same service. I have never had mail delivered to my door. I am sure that most of the people in this House have not had door-to-door delivery if they come from rural Canada. As changes occur from time to time we cannot expect the same service. Canada Post becomes more modern with new devices, new technology and electronic mail, which in some ways is like the railways. We are abandoning some railway lines because it makes sense to do so. Some post offices will have to close. It is the reality of life. At one time in my riding we had a thriving community of 250 people. This community now has six houses and I believe 19 residents, but it still has a post office. The costs are tremendous. That service could be changed. We perhaps need to look at where new trading exists.

These things have been discussed in committee by the Member from Winnipeg North Centre and the Member for Gander—Twillingate. They know the realities about changes coming forward. They realize that, but I think they also want to demonstrate in certain areas that there are concerns. Nothing else was asked than to allow the committee to do its work. But that could not happen today. That could not happen last week. We had to start with this proposal today. There is no sense to it. When the Member talks about stopping the proposed 2 cents increase, I guarantee that the Member and his entire Party would stand behind the unions if they asked for a 5 per cent increase. I do not know the exact number of the employees in the Corporation. He would stand behind them and say, "go for it, we are brothers". However, they

would not determine who should pay for it. He is suggesting that the Minister should deficit it again. What is \$150 million to the Canadian public? I think they were up to a \$300 million deficit for the Canada Post Corporation because no common sense prevailed. That must stop. The Canadian public is demanding that we stop that type of action.

● (1220)

We will continue to hear Members of Parliament before our committee. I have denied no Member the right to come before the committee and express his or her views. Some may say I am not doing my job right, but I believe that Members of Parliament should have the right to express their views before committees. That is the way I like to run the committee and that is the way I will continue to run it on all subjects.

In conclusion, we cannot support this motion at this time as it is ludicrous. We want to allow the committee to do its work rather than allowing a one-man opposition day to do the work.

**Mr. Keeper:** Madam Speaker, I have a few questions for my hon. colleague. I will not attack his rhetoric. He compared the closure of post offices to the closure of railway lines. He said that some post offices would have to close. He gave as an example of a community of 6,019 residents which still has a post office at a tremendous cost. Can the Member tell us the name of that community? Can he tell us how much that post office costs? In addition, how many post offices across Canada would he like to have closed? The president of Canada Post was forced to admit before the committee that several hundred post offices would close with no alternative put in place.

The Member spoke about fixing up the supermailboxes. Is he endorsing the use of the supermailbox in suburban communities? Is he endorsing the use of it in rural areas to substitute for lot line service, which is what Canada Post is planning? Does the Member endorse that for his own riding?

The Member spoke about the committee being a watch dog. If he wants the committee to be a watch dog, why has the committee closed the door after the horse is out of the barn with regard to postal rate increases? The majority of the committee is pushing this resolution and has decided to report to the House. This gives Canada Post a green light on its postal rate increase. If the Member is serious about the committee being a watch dog, why not continue the hearings until we get to the bottom of postal rate increases rather than allowing the Post Office to go ahead with them?

**Mr. Holtmann:** The community I used as an example was Sandridge, Manitoba, which had nine boxes at a cost of \$6,800 and had revenues of \$280. That post office was closed after consultations with the postal people in Winnipeg and myself as the Member of Parliament. We found the result of that closure to be very satisfactory for the people of that area. I have not received one letter of dissention on that. The next post office was only five miles down the road and the people were going there every day to buy their groceries anyway. That is one example of many.