

Post Office

The Postmaster General avoided discussion on the proposition by announcing the establishment of the internal committee study outside the House of Commons, in company with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro). I ask him in this motion, and in the other motions I have put forward, to take the Parliament of Canada into his confidence. Elected members have responsibility for grappling with problems as they arise in areas of public concern. I am sure you will agree, Mr. Speaker, that the Post Office is one of the greatest areas of concern at the moment. I hope we can have this report and the others we asked for so that we may have intelligent dialogue on the matter.

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity to participate in the debate on this motion. It is rather interesting to hear the Conservative critic for the Post Office mention the "hot stove" technique. He dealt with the problems within the Post Office, and there is no doubt that those problems are interpersonal. They are the interpersonal relationships between management and the employees. The government has embarked upon the wrong approach to the problems.

● (1722)

I draw to Your Honour's attention the Ritchie report on the Post Office. If we think the conditions presently tolerated by the government have exacerbated relationships in the Post Office between management and employees, can you imagine what would happen if the Ritchie report were implemented? That was the Conservative report on the Post Office. For example, it says no strikes in the Post Office. That is like carrying a match around where ammunition is stored. Imagine that! Will that help industrial relations within the Post Office? Secondly, one proposal was to the effect that the Post Office should sell off some of its operations. I presume they mean sell off the more profitable operations and let the taxpayers pick up the more costly operations in the Post Office.

After all the study done by the official opposition on the Post Office I do not think it will in any way come to grips with the problem. There is certainly no doubt whatsoever that the Post Office should operate as a service. It is not in the business of making a profit. It is in the business of providing service to Canadians at the best possible price at the most reasonable cost to the taxpayers of this country.

We have heard from the workers in the Post Office, and we have heard from the consumers who use and get service from the Post Office that the relationships within the Post Office are very bad. The Postmaster General (Mr. Lamontagne) has travelled across this country making speeches. I think he has been very abrasive in the statements which he has made with respect to the CUPW, with respect to conditions in the Post Office, and in trying to tag CUPW as the *bête noire* for the problems in the Post Office.

This motion calls for the production of a study done by Hay Associates. It is Part II of Canada Post 75. I have just had a copy of that report delivered to me in a brown envelope. I can understand why the Postmaster General has been so secretive

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

about this report, because in effect it places the blame and responsibility for the mess in the Post Office firmly and squarely on the shoulders of this government and, the revolving door approach to Postmasters General in that office over the last five or six years.

I would like to quote from the Hay report. Under the title "Organizational Clarity—Factor I", it says:

The group score on this factor (33rd percentile) indicates that your managers are uncertain about the aims, objectives, and future directions of Canada Post.

The reference to "your managers" is to postmasters general. This section goes on further to say:

A look at the individual items shows that while there tends to be some formal planning, it is incomplete. The goals are unclear and provide little useful context for the everyday functioning of the organization. Even when goals do exist, there seldom are well defined plans to achieve them. The limits of authority for managers are ill-defined and downward communications are poor.

After studying the Post Office management and inter-relationships within the Post Office, under the heading "Decision-Making Style" Hay and Associates said this:

While this is the factor on which the group had the highest score (37th percentile) it can by no means be considered very positive. Although planning is seen as being oriented somewhat toward the long term, decision-making tends to be based on a short range view and is delayed. Moreover, decisions are commonly based on inadequate information.

On the question of "Organizational Integration—Factor III," this is what the report had to say:

The fact that the group scores at only the 33rd percentile on this factor says that here is little interunit co-operation and a lack of understanding between units of each other's goals or difficulties. In addition, there is a lack of awareness of the inter-relationships among units and communications are generally poor. Even lateral communications, which are seen as the most positive aspect of integration, are barely adequate.

Under the heading "Management Style—Factor IV" the report says this:

This is the second lowest factor, and the fact that the score is at only the 27th percentile is a strong indication that your managers are extremely frustrated and feel they do not have sufficient say in how end results are achieved. More specifically, they feel that open discussion of conflicts, constructive criticism and innovation are not encouraged. Nor are managers encouraged to take reasonable risks in order to increase the organization's effectiveness. There is little freedom for them to take independent action in the performance of their jobs and, most significantly, support from higher levels of management is almost, totally lacking.

Under "Factor VI: Organizational Vitality" the report says:

Canada Post is viewed by its managers as being a conservative organization: unresponsive to changes in its environment; conservative—

Small "c" of course.

—in its decision-making; and having cautious goals. Consistent with this is the perception that Canada Post does offer considerable job security—little ever happens to alter the status quo.

The low score on this factor (32nd percentile) may be a reflection of other basic problems in the climate. The fact that on earlier dimensions the managers indicated that they have little freedom to act, that they find the decision-making processes to be less than adequate, and that they are unclear about the organization's plans and goals, probably all contribute to their perception that Canada Post lacks vitality.

On the question of "Compensation" which is "Factor VII", the report says this:

This is the factor which is perceived most negatively by your managers (21st percentile). None of the items could in any way be considered positive.