

Postal Service Policies

have been consultations and the hon. member for Gatineau (Mr. Clermont) seeks leave to revert to Routine Proceedings.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

SIXTEENTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. Gaston Clermont (Gatineau): With leave of the House, Mr. Speaker, I would like to revert to routine proceedings in order to table a committee report.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Faulkner): Does the House agree?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Clermont: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling the sixteenth report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, in both official languages.

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

[English]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—GOVERNMENT POSTAL SERVICE POLICIES

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Macquarrie:

This House repudiates the government's postal service policies and censures those ministers of the Crown responsible for the mismanagement of the postal services which, within two years, have deteriorated through fewer mail deliveries, fewer post offices, higher postal rates, disrupted and irregular services, and deplorable labour-management relations, to the prejudice of all Canadians, postal employees, and the national economy.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, in rising this afternoon during the debate on postal matters I want, first of all, to commend the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) for introducing this most serious subject to the House of Commons regarding the deterioration of postal services. I also congratulate him on the able manner in which he reviewed the problems facing our postal department and the many realistic suggestions he made to cure these ills.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

I was quite amused, in listening to the remarks a few moments ago of the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle), to hear him refer to the fiscal responsibility of the government. This raises a very touchy subject. I suppose he has forgotten that we have the highest cost of living in our history, the highest interest rates in our history and the greatest number of unemployed people in this country since the hungry thirties, as well as the greatest pile-up of wheat in Canadian history. He has also forgotten other instances such as the *Bonaventure*. If he wants to refer to this as the government's fiscal responsibility, I fail to understand his argument.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crouse: Liberal times are tough times.

Mr. Dinsdale: A Liberal apologist.

Mr. Bell: The same old bunch.

Mr. Southam: When my good friend, the hon. member for Fraser Valley East, said that the opposition had to be dragged by the heels into the twentieth century so far as modernization and bringing our services up-to-date are concerned, I wanted to ask him and members of the government if they consider waiting ten days to get a letter from the House of Commons to Spiritwood, Saskatchewan, to be a change for the sake of change and whether this is modernizing the postal services. I doubt it.

Mr. Dinsdale: We were better off in 1867.

Mr. Southam: I could recount another experience. Before this administration took office and the so-called improvements were made to the postal services, we could mail a letter in Gainsborough which would reach my friends in Pierson, Manitoba, a distance of eight miles, on the same day. But now if it is mailed on Friday, it takes four days. There are many such instances.

Mr. Perrault: Are you sure there is an address on it?

Mr. Southam: Yes. These are the facts because the government has set up an arbitrary rule that they cannot take postal trucks across provincial boundaries.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): You can walk faster than that.

Mr. Southam: We really have a crisis in the Post Office. It is acknowledged right, left and centre that the Canadian postal service has reached its lowest ebb in history. It has not taken us 100 or so years to reach such a sorry