

Routine Proceedings

temper tantrum in front of some officials of the post office in a futile attempt to try and keep the post office for his riding. Apparently he was unsuccessful, as have many other Conservative members who have probably tried this as well.

Canada Post at the present time is not in a deficit position. We know that.

The Marchment Committee, the Postal Services Review Board, said that the indiscriminate closing of rural post offices, whether or not they made any money, did not make sense. That policy should be revisited. I invite the minister to think about that. That is an independent agency which the minister himself appointed. When the government did not like some of the recommendations which the Postal Services Review Board made, they fired the committee. They turfed them out of office because they did not like the message that they heard.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I did not intend or expect to be talking about the post office today but I welcome the opportunity.

Unlike the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, I was not too alarmed to hear the New Democrats move concurrence of that report. Consistency has never been their long suit. I knew it had to be a cover for something else because they would not have suddenly been struck smart. So I was not sent running to the dictionary like the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell to find out what the NDP were doing. They were doing what they were usually doing—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Andre: —and only Jean-Claude Parrot knows for sure! I suspect that is why we are having this debate today.

But in any event, Mr. Speaker, it is comforting to know—I am sure Fidel Castro is comforted to know—that there is at least one or perhaps two other political parties in this hemisphere of the world that still believe in state ownership as preferable to private ownership. It is getting lonely for the fellow out there, getting lonely

all over the world. His soulmates are saying socialism does not work.

We must go to the market if we are going to satisfy the aspirations of our people for a decent standard of living and opportunity. And there was poor old Fidel getting isolated on his island in the Caribbean saying: “Woe is me! Am I the only one who still believes in state ownership? Socialism is the preferable system.” Naw, he is not isolated. We have the Liberal Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party of Canada who are absolutely and firmly committed to the principle that the state can do it better than any private organization, and the state should do it, should do it all.

Gorbachev does not believe that any more. But the New Democrats do, and apparently so do the Liberals.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say they are welcome to their points of view. If the lessons of history do not serve to educate and they are determined to remain the soulmates of Fidel Castro and, is it Hawkes in Albania? There are not many soulmates left for you folks, is there? It is getting awfully lonely being a socialist.

An hon. member: Hawkes is in Australia!

Mr. Andre: Nowadays socialists are getting to be a rare breed and except for the odd professor, it is really quite rare to find anybody to willingly come out and openly suggest that socialism is still a way to go, state ownership is still preferable to private ownership. I am sure the member for Papineau does not agree with the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

When the hon. member for Papineau was Postmaster General, he indicated that for the post office to be able to perform in a satisfactory manner for its customers, the people of Canada, it was necessary to remove political interference and that political interference was at the root of the historic problems of the post office. That was obvious to everyone who has studied the post office and, goodness knows, there has been study after study after study. In spite of that, we still have the hon. member from the New Democratic Party asking me, as a minister, to intervene and impose my political judgment on the post office in Dubuc, Saskatchewan. I have forgotten the name of the village in—

Mr. Boudria: Dalkeith.