

Canada Post Corporation

service which I and many others have been asking for. For example, in Kamloops, areas such as Aberdeen Heights and Dufferin are totally urban in design and density, yet they have been unable to receive door-to-door delivery for many years. The entire district of Salmon Arm, which is a highly urban area with a population in excess of 15,000, has again been waiting for years for door-to-door delivery. It seems to be unfair. In Calgary, Alberta, some areas have finally got home delivery. But we still have many urban areas that are still unable to get that kind of service.

● (1750)

I have one final problem that I want to bring to the attention of the House. It concerns communities which have postal box delivery. Often addressed mail does not have the box number included and the mail is not delivered, but returned. In smaller communities this problem is even more evident. There seems to be no reason why post office officials who know the people in the community very well refuse to deliver mail to the boxes simply because the mail does not have the box number on it. We know that regulations require that all details are to be listed on mail. But in the absence of a list or directory of persons and their box numbers, it seems silly that the only time post office officials are allowed by the regulations to forward mail to boxes without an indication of the box number on the item is when it emanates from outside of Canada.

The excuse used by the post office, although it is not in the regulations, is that it cannot publish such a directory of names and box numbers because it would be contrary to the privacy section of the Human Rights Act. But if someone wants to have an unlisted box number, why can that not be allowed? A person can have an unlisted telephone number. If someone wants to have an unlisted box number, why can a person not make that request to the post office in the same way a person does for a telephone? You simply stipulate to the telephone company that you do not want your name and number listed. Why can that not be done for a post office box number? Why that is permissible under the Human Rights Act for a telephone and not for a post office box is beyond me, and it is beyond the comprehension of many of the people I serve and, I am sure, of many people across Canada. There are many anomalies and oddities in the regulations for which no one seems to be able to find a sensible basis. I do hope that in the very near future many of these things can be straightened out and we can get on with our jobs.

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to express a few points of view today with respect to the Canada Post Corporation. You will recall that making Canada Post Corporation a Crown corporation was supposed to solve many administrative ills. The government engaged a high-powered guy—

Mr. Darling: A high-priced one.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): —to take it over, to straighten out problems dealing with such things as mail delivery in towns. However, I have not seen much

improvement. I support the motion made by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert). I even find myself in agreement with the hon. member for York North (Mr. Gamble) who spoke this afternoon. I never thought I would live to see the day I would agree with him, but I do today. I agree that Canada Post Corporation should be limited not only to the 6 per cent and 5 per cent increases in rates but I say Canada Post should not get a penny more from the public until it has shown that it has its house in order and it is not squandering public funds.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): It is time there was some order in the post office. As a matter of fact, I have come to the conclusion that the administration of Canada Post Corporation is perhaps the most arrogant group that one could find anywhere in the world. There is a problem in my own home community. For three weeks, since the postmistress resigned, I have been trying to find out what is going on. I might just as well be talking to the man in the moon because my telephone calls are never returned. When I telephone to make an inquiry I am always told that everybody is at a meeting, or they are out or up or down, but never there. One wonders how is one supposed to get answers when no one is ever there. It seems to me that when somebody who represents a constituency in this country calls a Crown corporation, one should have the right to expect a reply and not be completely ignored. I know that Canada Post does not have much time for Members of Parliament. After all, we are a pretty lowly species. I suppose people in Canada Post read the press and find out just how lowly we are and unworthy of discussion. But in any event, when I call Canada Post, I expect to get replies.

There is one thing of which I want to assure the public and members of the House who are having problems with Canada Post, and that is that Section 33(2) of the Canada Post Corporation Act, formerly known as Bill C-42, states that every annual report made before Parliament pursuant to subsection (1) stands permanently referred to such standing committee of Parliament as is established for the purpose of reviewing matters relating to transportation.

It so happens, Mr. Speaker, that, by the grace of my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Transport I am the chairman of that committee. One day Canada Post will at least have to conform with the law and its report will come before the Standing Committee on Transport. For once Canada Post officials will have to answer questions put to it. If I am still chairman of that committee, I am quite prepared to state here and now that the hon. member for Vaudreuil will be able to obtain answers to his questions. I will ensure as well that other members of the House who have been unable to get responses from Canada Post will also get their questions answered. That is the reason the act states that representatives of Canada Post must come before a committee of Parliament to justify the annual report of Canada Post Corporation. That is a wide reference. At that time we can find out about persons living in