

Oral Questions

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION

CONSULTATION WITH COMMUNITIES

Mr. Albert Girard (Restigouche): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Canada Post Corporation. Recently, the Standing Committee on Government Operations presented its second report to the House. The report stressed the importance of consultation. During hearings the committee was presented with horrendous stories concerning the lack of consultation between Canada Post and the population it is supposed to serve. Will the Minister instruct Canada Post to confirm its commitment to service by undertaking meaningful consultation with all communities affected by its decisions?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. There certainly were mistakes made in the past. But, as I have indicated to the House, the consultations are to be meaningful and to involve the Member of Parliament from the start. As an example, in the town of St. Albert in the constituency of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell the Member for that riding was actively involved in discussions, as there was a change in the postal services there. I understand from the Hon. Member, from Post Office officials and others, that it went very well and everybody was involved. The consultations were meaningful and to everyone's satisfaction.

I hope that that will be the pattern for the future. I hope that Members of Parliament will keep me apprised if in fact we slip off that pattern since we all have a responsibility in this regard.

VICTORIA—CASUAL EMPLOYEES—PICKET LINE POLICY

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Post Office. I wonder why, when the Minister gives an example of a community giving consent for a change of postal service, he does not elaborate on it as policy. My question relates to a news report which states that in Victoria the Post Office is making it a condition of employment for casual employees that they be prepared to cross a picket line. I wonder if the Minister would indicate that that action is provocative, and would he dissociate himself from it and call upon Canada Post to seek to reach an agreement rather than to provoke a strike?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, all parties—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order—

Some Hon. Members: Not during Question Period.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

BABY GIRL BORN TO MEMBER FOR HAMILTON EAST

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to your comment on Tuesday regarding the Hon. Member for Hamilton East, your prediction has come true. There are now two of them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): At the Ottawa Civic Hospital the Hon. Member for Hamilton East made history. She is the first sitting Member of the House of Commons to give birth—to an eight-pound baby girl.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I think all Members will join me in offering the Hon. Member and her husband, Ric Marrero, our warm and heart-felt congratulations and best wishes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1450)

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Hamilton East is also the first Member to manage to get a point of order raised in Question Period for many years. The Minister may continue his answer.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

VICTORIA—CASUAL EMPLOYEES—PICKET LINE POLICY

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think I remember the question, but first let me congratulate the Hon. Member for Hamilton East on this tremendous occasion.

The Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre is aware that all 28 contracts which various bargaining units have with the Post Office are up. They are under active negotiation. They are at the table now. It is in his interest, in our interest, and in everybody's interest that we try not to involve ourselves in those issues and thereby inadvertently provoke some action which could only be damaging to the collective bargaining process and to Canada.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, I am sure it is the first time the Minister has been protected by the Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister.