

if you do not solve industrial relations in the Post Office work place.

Here is another significant paragraph which indicates that the Postmaster General has read the report:

Mail is a vital factor in almost everyone's life. Every day thousands of people write countless letters, and unless the Post Office delivers them, day after day, the economy slows to a crawl, friends and relatives lose touch with one another or, as almost everyone notices in times of labour conflict, everything comes to a shuddering stop.

That is very dramatic language, and it describes the situation that exists in the Post Office at the present time to perfection.

**Mr. Baldwin:** In the country.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Yes, in the country as well.

Obviously, the Postmaster General has read the report, and all we are asking is that it be released so the public can see at least that the officials in the Post Office Department are endeavouring to come to grips with the difficulties.

● (1712)

Let me indicate that there is no improvement in the situation. On the three major fronts of postal affairs where the Post Office interfaces with the people who are most involved with the whole mail delivery process, the Post Office management is in trouble. First of all, there is the public, which is in constant cry protesting the deterioration in service.

The *Toronto Star* has assigned one of its chief investigative reporters to conduct an in-depth study of the deteriorating climate in the work place of the Post Office. The reporter, Sidney Katz, has an outstanding reputation in this regard, and I should like to quote from his report in the *Toronto Star* of May 27, 1978, as follows:

A three-week *Star* investigation suggests the union often has good reason for its militancy. The union lists these gripes:

Insensitive and boorish supervisors; mistreatment of probationers; ridiculously long delays in getting paid; failure to consult the union about technological change; unreasonable delays in handling grievances;—

There is a backlog of thousands of grievances, and I will put on the record in a moment an item from *Ottawa Citizen* of May 25, under the heading "Postal Grievances Costly". The *Toronto Star* article continues:

—managerial incompetence; the improper use of casual and part-time help; unreasonable censorship of notices the union wants to post on the plant bulletin boards; working conditions which are unsatisfactory because of noise, monotony and night work.

You can add to that list disciplinary procedures like this one. It's prescribed by an official Post Office managerial document as a cure for major problems and it's called the 'hot stove' approach.

The manual says it is a concept to help supervisors deal with the basic dilemma of discipline. 'Like touching a hot stove, the person (the offender) will have an experience which is 1, immediate; 2, consistent; and 3, impersonal', it says.

Joanne Leader, 22, is one of the 3,000 federal employees who work inside the mammoth, super-mechanized gateway postal facility in Mississauga.

She protested to the *Star*: 'The public has no idea of the abuse we have to put up with from management. We have to fight like crazy for rights that other employees take for granted. We're ordinary human beings who want to be treated fairly and with respect.'

### Post Office

This points out the continuing problem with the union and with labour. A pile up of grievances must be avoided as they are costly.

The article in the *Ottawa Citizen* of May 25 begins as follows:

An ever increasing number of grievances referred to adjudicators from the area in the Post Office has helped lead to a major increase in the cost of adjudicators. J. H. Brown, chairman of the Public Service Staff Relations Board (PSSRB) said today.

Something has to be done, Mr. Speaker. I am sure if we had access to the climate report of the Hay group we would be able to offer some helpful suggestions to the Postmaster General as he endeavours to come to grips with these problems. According to the speech he made at Port Sydney he is obviously trying to come to grips with them.

Not only is the Post Office suffering from low morale on the labour front but the public is also beginning to act. A letter came across my desk this afternoon which is similar to many that come to my office every day. It is addressed to the Postmaster General, and reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Lamontagne:

I am returning the brochure 'The way to better postal service' received with my family allowance cheque. This brochure is an insult as well as a waste of money. You are implying that I and the rest of the Canadian public are responsible for the deplorable state of the Canadian postal system. Most Canadians are co-operating and trying their utmost to get the mail through. Your meagre suggestions would not improve the situation at all. The problems with the postal service are internal and until you and your colleagues have enough courage to do the job for which you were elected the postal union will continue to make the Canadian public suffer under this farce you call 'postal service'.

The letter was dated May 19 and signed by a Mrs. Vera E. Gillespie. This sort of public reaction is reflected in the press, so the Postmaster General must be aware of it.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Post Office customers are at breaking point and, of course, if you lose your customers there is no use staying in business. The Periodical Press Association of Canada is taking the Postmaster General and his department to court because of the illegal method of raising rates, and particularly because of the failure to consult and inform customers that this increase was in prospect. Major users of the Post Office such as *Readers Digest* are just as concerned with the lack of efficiency, increasing costs and declining services. These protests come across my desk. They indicate the dilemma when the efficiency of an organization depends upon three groups—the public, the inside workers, and the customers. They all lay their complaints on doorstep of the Postmaster General.

We have a major dilemma, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think it will be solved by the tactics the Postmaster General has used so far. He has announced yet another internal study on the advisability of converting the Post Office into a Crown corporation. I imagine this will be a secret document and that members of this House will not have access to it. We will probably not be able to consider the recommendations in open debate in this House. The report is scheduled for July 13.