

efficient in its operations and that it should not be able to extend its traditional monopoly into areas where traditionally it has not operated and where it has not justified to Parliament the need for extending that monopoly.

Members on this side of the House support the decision made by the Post Office to move into electronic mail. It is a positive decision, one which will obviously improve the services provided to Canadians in the future. There is no reason the Post Office should not modernize, and update its methods of delivery and transmitting messages from one Canadian to another.

Where we break with the members to our left is on the question of monopoly and whether Canadians should be coerced into using a postal service if they choose to use another service which in their judgment gives them better value for the money, or which provides a service which is not available from the Post Office. We on this side of the House say the Post Office should compete. We say go ahead, move into those new areas where traditionally the Post Office has not been but where it is necessary to be involved with a modern delivery service if we are to meet the needs of Canadians. However, at the same time the Post Office moves into those areas, let us not use the definition section of the bill or the regulation-making authority within the bill to extend the traditional Post Office monopoly to new areas never justified to Parliament. That is the fight members on this side have been making on this bill. Indeed, it is the concern expressed within the Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments.

There are a number of motions to amend the bill before the House tonight. I do not want to protract my remarks this evening and prevent us from getting to other motions that have been made, and which are equally important, but I want to indicate that I support the motion by my colleague. I feel it would be in the interest of Canada and the Post Office if the motion proposed by my colleague was adopted by this House.

Mr. Bill Wright (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to support Motion No. 1 relating to the Post Office in the name of the hon. member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn). I want to comment briefly on the remarks by the hon. member for Kootenay East-Revelstoke (Mr. Parker) who suggested that many members of the Conservative Party are against the Post Office becoming a Crown corporation. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am at odds with the hon. member for Kootenay East-Revelstoke when we consider the types of things he wants the Post Office to do.

It is fair to say that most of us recognize the change in service of the Post Office over the last 15 to 20 years. We think this will be a tremendous improvement in the Post Office. Perhaps a little later I can relate directly to that.

On May 16 of last year, I presented a motion under Standing Order 43:

That the Postmaster General and this government direct the Post Office to immediately commence regular mail service in all areas of Calgary North where delivery has been lacking for a period longer than 60 days.

Canada Post Corporation Act

As is usual, the Liberals all voted against that motion, even though there are many members on all sides of the House who are aware of the deplorable conditions within the Post Office. In my riding the situation is even more desperate than in others.

On June 5 I asked the Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet) when service would be improved in Calgary North. I pointed out that there are 4,000 homes in Calgary North without any type of postal service. There are very few ridings with 4,000 homes without any type of postal service.

During the adjournment debate on June 26, I discussed some of the intricate problems in the postal system in Calgary North. I pointed out to the Postmaster General some of the ridiculous situations that were evident. To briefly review those situations, there are four areas in Calgary North: Beddington Heights, Ranchlands, Edgemont and Hawkesworth. They are all without any type of postal service. Those people have to travel up to five miles a day to get their mail. I did not receive a satisfactory reply in the adjournment debate.

The situation is briefly this, and this was related to the Postmaster General, the Deputy Postmaster General, the regional postmaster, all individuals within the Post Office in a position of authority. It has to do with the high costs. We prepared an analysis and we convinced them, at least I think we did, that it would cost a quarter million dollars to correct the situation in Calgary North. It was costing more than that for the gas which the residents of Calgary North were using just to go to and from the Post Office.

● (2030)

Unfortunately, the Postmaster General has done little. I think we have been very generous with him in that we have not burdened him during this time when he was trying to convert the Post Office with numerous problems creeping up from day to day. When the Post Office becomes a Crown corporation we will not be prepared to stand aside and watch these problems continue. We expect to see some improvement. This relates very well to the area covered by motion No. 1 put forward by the hon. member for Mississauga South. We are very concerned that the community clubs, the department stores and the various community associations which wish to deliver their magazines, bulletins and invoices will still be allowed to do so. This motion is dedicated to that end and we support it very strongly.

There are two main unions involved in the Post Office, the Letter Carriers' Union and CUPW. There is no question that these two unions are at odds with each other, as many of us have related to the Postmaster General. This is something our friends to the left, the NDP, are not prepared to discuss. They are embarrassed by the fact that these two unions are not getting along. There is no question in Calgary North that this is very evident, and the Postmaster General continues to ignore the problem. If we do not include this motion within the parameters of the bill we will be enlarging on the situation since many of these community associations and other volunteer groups will be left high and dry. They will have to rely on