

America and has worked in Europe, Mexico and the south Pacific.

The use of technology, the effective interpretation of the needs of Canadians and of business opportunities, the development of partnerships with industries and businesses both domestically and internationally, are all fundamental to the creation and successful development of a business that is growing and adapting to the needs of the marketplace.

Tremendous progress has been achieved by the corporation since it has been given a clear commercial mandate by this government. To achieve financial self-sufficiency, Canada Post transformed itself into the effective and reliable provider of postal products and services it now is. Technology, customer service, and partnerships made the difference and remain fundamental to the corporation's ongoing success.

However, for all the strategic decision-making, the investments in technology or work with customers, most of what the corporation does depends on the people who are Canada Post.

Obviously we on this side of the House, and hopefully our colleagues on the other side, support this legislation because we believe it will have a positive effect on employee-management relations at Canada Post.

Labour relations are no different from other aspects of Canada Post's business, so serious reforms were brought to bear on the relationship between employer and unions at Canada Post. An example of this is the attendance management program which has reduced absenteeism from an average of 19 days a year for each full-time employee to levels close to the industry standard.

Another part of the transformation occurred when the Canada Labour Relations Board reviewed the number of bargaining units at the corporation and ruled they be consolidated into four units. One of these is the operations unit represented by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

Canadians are only too aware of the sometimes difficult relationship that Canada Post has with its largest union. It is not surprising that any postal disruption

generates headlines and affects almost every person in the country who receives or sends mail.

It is my hope that this legislation will build on the improvements which have already been accomplished at Canada Post. The process of change at Canada Post has had its ups and downs but it has paid off.

Canada Post is a far cry from the post office it replaced a decade ago. Management's approach to its employees is far more than the headlines give them credit for. Not everything is dark in Canada Post's labour relations. There is another side to every coin.

The corporation has achieved collective agreements with all its other bargaining units without work disruption regardless of a number of serious incidents during the strike.

Canadians should remember that the vast majority of postal workers want only to have a secure job with good pay and decent working conditions. They want respect, fair treatment, and recognition for their good work.

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One of the biggest challenges that Canada Post has had to face over the years has been to change the mind-set of its workers to instil the values, threats and opportunities of a competitive business in thousands of employees who once worked in a government department that had little competition.

This legislation will promote a greater understanding and involvement of employees and the challenges and opportunities of the future. That is fundamental to their motivation to become builders and beneficiaries of the corporation's success. It is important that employees realize that Canada Post is a competitive business, that success rests upon their shoulders, and that meeting the needs of Canadians is the strongest job and income security package ever invented.

This government initiative is the latest step in a process that has already begun to change the way that Canada Post relates to its employees. Many of them have already demonstrated their commitment to the corporation and its future and have made significant contributions. Canada Post introduced a number of programs specifically designed to recognize and reward exceptional performance.