

July 15, 2010

Federal government uses shamefully undemocratic means to partially deregulate Canada Post

The Conservatives have been trying to partially deregulate our public post office for many years. They have succeeded only by being undemocratic. In March, the government inserted partial postal deregulation into its budget bill (C-9), making the issue a question of confidence and a potential election trigger. Under this pressure, the bill passed on July 12th.

CUPW fought long and hard against this bill and two earlier bills containing the same deregulatory provision. We used every means at our disposal in an attempt to defeat the bills - letters, rallies, meetings, phone calls, opinion editorials and dogged determination – and received invaluable assistance from our allies.

Unfortunately, this government fights dirty. Let's face it, including an issue as important as postal deregulation in the budget bill was cheating. There was little opportunity for democratic debate and virtually no opportunity to stop the government from taking its first step down the road to postal deregulation without an unpopular election.

Of course, it is just a matter of time before we go to the polls again and when we do, we intend to hold the government accountable for what it did.

A brief history

January 16, 2006 - During the 2006 election, the Canadian International Mail Association (CIMA) demanded a parliamentary review of the exclusive privilege provisions of the *Canada Post Corporation Act*. Courts had found that international mailers were violating Canada Post's exclusive privilege to handle letters.

January 12, 2007 - The government said "no changes to Canada Post's exclusive privilege would be considered without thorough policy analysis." This did not happen, not even during the Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review.

Oct 29, 2007 - The government proposed legislation that would partially deregulate Canada Post by removing international letters from Canada Post's exclusive privilege to handle letters (C-14). This bill died when the 2008 election was called.

June 17, 2009 - The government reintroduced its legislation in a bill called C-44. This bill died when Parliament was prorogued in 2009.

March 29, 2010 -The government inserted postal deregulation into its budget bill. This bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Finance in April.

May 11-12, 2010 -The National Farmers Union (NFU) made a written submission to the Standing Committee on Finance on the importance of keeping international letters as part of Canada Post's exclusive privilege. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and CUPW appeared before the Committee on the same issue. We recommended that partial postal deregulation be removed from C-9.

May 13, 2010 -The Committee did a clause-by-clause examination of Bill C-9 and approved the provision to partially deregulate Canada Post by a vote of 6 to 4. All Bloc Quebecois and New Democratic Party (NDP) members on the Committee voted against deregulation. One Liberal voted against while another voted for. One Liberal was absent. All Conservatives voted for deregulation.

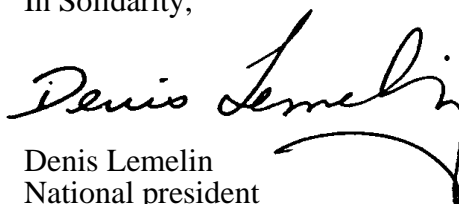
June 8, 2010 - Following this, the House of Commons passed Bill C-9. The NDP had attempted, with Bloc support, to eliminate the provision partially deregulating Canada Post, but was unsuccessful. Some Senators tried but failed to remove this provision. The bill received Royal Assent on July 12, 2010.

The struggle against postal deregulation will continue in the upcoming election.

The union would like to thank both members and allies for their support in the fight against postal deregulation. We are especially grateful for the assistance we received from the Bloc, CLC, NDP and NFU and some Senators.

The struggle continues.

In Solidarity,


Denis Lemelin
National president

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