

Dear Madame,/Sirs

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide a submission to the Strategic Review of Canada Post. I think it is extremely important that ordinary citizens such as myself, be given the opportunity and means to participate in the debate to decide the future of public institutions such as Canada Post. On the other hand I am quite frankly, astonished that this process does not include public hearings which I think are crucial, if we are to have a true and open debate. If my memory serves me correctly I believe that ensuring an open and transparent government was a key issue during the last federal election. If the sponsorship scandal taught us one thing it is that the citizens of this country have neither the tolerance nor the appetite for private, exclusive governance.

With all due and the utmost respect, the appointment of a chairperson to the board who has a much documented opinion of the crucial issue of deregulation is, in the visual sense, very questionable.

When you include the fact that the call for submissions is occurring in a very short time frame, in the middle of summer and with very little public exposure, one can quite easily cast a cloud of suspicion on the entire process.

As an observer to the public hearings in Winnipeg during the last mandate review, I was impressed with the inclusivity and openness of the proceedings. I was impressed with the emotion and passion of the submissions, something that cannot be as profoundly captured with written submissions. What I also discovered from these hearings was that there are organizations and individuals that stand to benefit greatly from a deregulated post office .

Although they had every right to participate in the debate, their motives were clearly opportunistic and self serving. The most interesting and compelling submitters were the ones who had nothing to gain, but much to lose.

The future of Canada Post should never be regarded or considered “an opportunity”. It is an institution that was created and paid for by the citizens of Canada for the express purpose of linking all people and all communities to each other . It’s not just simply communication. It’s reliability, security, affordability, universality, heritage, confidence – all related to communication and service. And it’s a great success story in spite of the critics, opportunists, ideologues and predators.

Canada Post President and CEO Moya Greene had this to say at a recent speech to the Empire Club in Toronto. “Every business day, Canada Post delivers 40 million pieces of mail over one of the biggest areas in the world, with some of the most volatile weather conditions. Our company is an essential part of the infrastructure, just as essential as bridges, airports and shipping lanes, we provide vital communication links for almost every business in the country.” Ms. Greene further comments on Canada Post’s image with respect to it’s citizens, “Nationally, a survey conducted earlier this year by a very respected polling firm, Strategic Council, found that Canada Post is in fact the most trusted federal institution in the

country; more trusted than the federal parliament, more trusted than the federal public service, more trusted than the Supreme Court of Canada, more trusted than our wonderful military” Ms. Greene continues by stating that a Leger Marketing poll found that Canada Post, in the province of Quebec, is the third most admired company. “ We scored higher than Toyota, Sony, and Tim Horton’s”.

With respect to Canada Post’s financial performance Ms. Greene stated “ In the past decade or so, Canada Post has contributed close to a billion dollars in taxes, dividends and capital returns to our shareholder” In fact Canada Post has turned a profit for over the last 10 years.

With all of this in mind, with Canada Post processing tens of millions of pieces of information daily for Canadians, with the Post Office clearly a highly regarded and trusted public institution, with CPC consistently turning a profit, why on earth would we want to overhaul it ?

Economically, Canada Post has been subjected to a wide variety of market conditions since becoming a crown corporation and not only has it survived, it has in fact thrived. Competitors have always been there, but are they willing to compete for Rankin Inlet, or Goose Bay? Who would provide a universal, affordable postal service in an unregulated environment ? A very real, if not probable consequence of deregulation would be the erosion of services and or increase in cost for basic postal services for rural Canadians. Is this something people are willing to consider simply for the sake of maximizing profits?

The topic of regulation vs. non regulation is as much ideological as it is pragmatic. Shall this debate be about ideology ? Perhaps it will be for some but the one thing to consider is; what are the consequences of deregulation versus the consequences of maintaining the current structure ? Deregulation has not been successful in many postal administrations and in some cases, disastrous. Do we want to take a chance and end up joining that exclusive club, because at the end of the day, deregulation is a huge , high-stakes gamble. Maintaining the exclusive privilege is a sure bet that Canada Post continues on it’s current path of providing an affordable, successful, universal and vital public service. I am not advocating strictly for the status quo, in fact I believe that Canada Post should be excluded from paying dividends for a period of time in order to offset the cost of the 1.9 billion dollars CPC announced it was investing towards modernization. If anything needs to change it’s the level and variety of service for the citizens of Canada, the owners of Canada Post. Thank you very much for taking the time to read my submission.

Myron May  
Manitoba