June 28, 2010

Dear Mayor,

Re: The Canadian Postal Service Charter and the Future

I am writing to follow-up on the federal government’s 2008 review of Canada Post, which resulted in the establishment of the Canadian Postal Service Charter.

The Charter outlines the federal government’s expectations for Canada Post. Mostly, it reiterates existing policy. For example, there is an expectation of five day a week delivery to every address in the country. But the Charter also acknowledges that providing postal services to rural areas is an integral part of universal postal service, which is very important. As well, the Charter includes an expectation that Canada Post will maintain “the moratorium on the closure of rural post offices.”

While it’s a good start, the Charter isn’t altogether reasonable. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) believes this document needs to be dramatically improved, especially in relation to the moratorium on rural closures. I have attached a copy of a fact sheet which outlines a number of our concerns.

The Canadian Postal Service Charter is up for review every five years. We hope to make the case, over the next few years, for a vastly improved Charter.

Canada Post’s plans for the future

CUPW is also concerned about the course that Canada Post Corporation is charting for the future.

Our public post office is the midst of modernizing and reviewing its operations. These initiatives will result in the destruction of jobs in hundreds of communities across the country. Canada Post’s modernization plans alone could destroy thousands of positions.

The corporation is also planning on privatizing its contact centres and the National Philatelic Centre in Ottawa, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Antigonish and Fredericton. This move threatens to destroy over 300 jobs and erode the quality of this service.

As you know, the corporation is also cutting services by eliminating rural mailbox delivery, closing post offices and removing street letterboxes.

These service and job cuts undermine communities, especially small and rural communities that are already struggling to preserve local economies.

Clerks

Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Syndicat des travailleurs et travailleuses des postes

The struggle continues
La lutte continue
Resolution on Canadian Postal Service Charter and Cuts to Public Postal Service and Jobs

WHEREAS Canada Post plans on cutting thousands of jobs in hundreds of communities across the country by modernizing and reviewing its operations and privatizing philatelic and call centres.

WHEREAS Canada Post is also cutting services by eliminating rural mail box delivery, closing post offices, removing street letter boxes and other means.

WHEREAS these cuts are indicative of a Canada Post that increasingly puts commercial interests before the public interest.

WHEREAS the government’s Canadian Postal Service Charter does not adequately protect the public interest or the public nature of our post office, especially when Canada Post is considering cuts to public postal service or privatizing part of its operations (e.g. post offices, call centre, etc.)

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the (name of municipality) write a letter to Rob Merrifield, the Minister responsible for Canada Post and ask that he 1) instruct Canada Post to stop cutting public postal service and jobs and start acting like the public service people want it to be 2) consult with the public, municipalities, members of Parliament, postal unions and other major stakeholders to dramatically improve the Canadian Postal Service Charter.

MAILING INFORMATION
Please send your resolution to: Rob Merrifield, Minister of State for Transport, Place de Ville, Tower C, 29th Floor, 330 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N5.

Please send copies of your resolution to:

1. Denis Lemelin, President, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, 377 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 1Y3
2. Your member of Parliament. You can get your MP’s name, phone number and address by calling 1-800 463-6868 (at no charge) or going to the Parliament of Canada website: http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/index.asp?Language=E
3. Hans Cunningham, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities 24 Clarence Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 5P3

Please consider submitting this resolution at the next annual meeting of your provincial union, association or federation. Thank you.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Contact George Floresco, 3rd National Vice President, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, 377 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 1Y3, (613-236-7238 ext 7909)
CANADIAN POSTAL SERVICE CHARTER

Preamble

The Canada Post Corporation was created to provide a standard of postal service that meets the needs of the people of Canada. The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring transparency in how Canada Post provides quality postal services to all Canadians, rural and urban, individuals and businesses, in a secure and financially self-sustaining manner.

The Government has therefore established the Canadian Postal Service Charter to describe its expectations regarding Canada Post’s service standards and related activities in providing postal services that meet the needs of consumers of postal services in Canada. These expectations are not intended to modify or derogate from Canada Post’s obligations as set out in the *Canada Post Corporation Act* or any other legislation.

Universal Service

1. Canada Post will maintain a postal system that allows individuals and businesses in Canada to send and receive mail within Canada and between Canada and elsewhere. Canada Post will provide a service for the collection, transmission and delivery of letters, parcels and publications.

2. The provision of postal services to rural regions of the country is an integral part of Canada Post’s universal service.

Affordable Rates

3. Canada Post will charge uniform postage rates for letters of similar size and weight, so that letters to Canadian addresses will require the same postage, regardless of the distance to reach the recipient.

4. As required by the *Canada Post Corporation Act*, Canada Post will charge postage rates that are fair and reasonable and, together with other revenues, are sufficient to cover the costs incurred in its operations.

5. Canada Post will provide advance notice of and publicly advertise proposed pricing changes for regulated letter mail products and consult with consumers during the rate-setting process.

Frequent and Reliable Delivery

6. Canada Post will deliver letters, parcels and publications five days a week (except for statutory holidays) to every Canadian address, except in remote areas where less frequent service may be necessary due to limited access to the community.

7. Canada Post will deliver to every address in Canada. This may be delivery to the door, a community mail box, group mail box, a rural mail box, a postal box, general delivery at the post office or delivery to a central point in apartment/office buildings.

8. Canada Post will deliver letter mail:
   - Within a community within two business days;
   - Within a province within three business days; and
   - Between provinces within four business days.
On Saturday, September 12, 2009, the federal Conservatives quietly announced a *Canadian Postal Service Charter* that outlines the government’s expectations for Canada Post in regard to service standards and other matters.

The Charter largely reiterates existing policy and includes an expectation that Canada Post will maintain “the moratorium on the closure of rural post offices.”

The Charter also acknowledges that providing postal services to rural areas is an integral part of universal postal service.

While it’s a good start, the Charter isn’t altogether reasonable.

1) Moratorium on closures needs to be clarified

The government has confirmed that the Charter maintains the existing moratorium.

The moratorium that has been in effect since 1994 protects public post offices in rural and small one-post-office towns.

Unfortunately, it appears that Canada Post does not believe the moratorium protects the public nature of post offices. The corporation says each situation will be “determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the affected community.”

The government needs to tell people if there is an expectation that the post offices and outlets covered by the moratorium are to be public offices and not private outlets.

2) Consultation period needs to extended

The Charter says that the government expects Canada Post to inform people at least one month prior to closing, moving or amalgamating their public post office or changing their method of delivery. The corporation is also expected to explore options that address people’s concerns. One month is not enough time. The government should dramatically extend the consultation period.

3) Exceptions to moratorium need to go

There are too many exceptions to the moratorium. Communities may
People's Postal Declaration

We the undersigned believe that Canada Post should share the benefits of postal modernization with the public in the form of improved public postal service and jobs.

We want a modern post office that:

- is universal, public, affordable and green.
- maintains and improves services.
- works for people and employees.
- provides good jobs in communities.
- promotes economic growth and healthy communities.
- is service-oriented and financially viable.

Produced by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and Public Service Alliance of Canada