

*Government Orders*

It does not address the basic essential question, which is service to Canadians. It is important to make profits. It is important to make money if you can. It is also important to respond to the needs of Canadians in a number of sectors, certainly in this sector.

People talk about making the corporation a more efficient one, one which is responsive to the needs of Canadians. Let me give you a few examples of how this is going about right now and how it has impacted upon my riding.

There have been a number of closures of postal outlets. For example, the Marion Pharmacy in August of 1989, a full postal outlet in the Norwood area, closed despite numerous letters and petitions from local residents. Canada Post had offered the proprietors at that time some postal services but never followed through. This is not responsive to the needs of Canadians.

Metro Drugs on Autumnwood Drive closed in the fall of 1990. I am told that the business closed this spring. This is not good for business.

There are other examples. McCullough Drugs (Tache and Marion) closed within the last two years, as did the Drake pharmacy outlet which closed in 1991 despite thousands of petitioners and concerned residents, including a seniors' home on Elizabeth Road, very close to that facility.

We have to realize that the closing of those outlets and the changing of the services in those outlets affect all residents of the area, particularly those who are seniors and those who may have a physical or other disability limiting their ability to get about.

How will the offering of shares to employees help these people who until recently were able to use those facilities I have mentioned? It will not. It simply will not, not one little bit. How will this bill address the concerns of millions of rural Canadians whose post offices have been closed?

That is a serious issue. It is a serious concern for those smaller, more isolated communities. It is one that it will do nothing about. I suspect it will exacerbate it.

I have not even mentioned supermailboxes. We have not talked about those recently. I am sure that my

colleagues would like to be reminded that they are still not very popular. I get stories, I get calls from residents still. Very often older people find it difficult because if placed on the wrong side of the street it can be extremely slippery. We have adverse weather conditions in a number of areas in Canada, such as Winnipeg. They are still extremely angry. They do not see this as an improvement. On the contrary, they feel as if they have not been treated fairly and have not been consulted.

• (1320)

I am going to tell you a little incident about a lady who called my office. She sent a watch to Calgary in an envelope that was properly addressed and that had a return address on it. It had the whole works. Unknown to her, though, was that the company was no longer operating. What happened since then is that the post office did not return the envelope. They have been unable to locate it. What is worse is that they are unwilling to compensate her for the lost item. We shall continue to pursue that. We are not going to give up.

[*Translation*]

As I just said, this bill is not at all specific; it is very vague. We do not know exactly what it is talking about. In fact, it overlooks basic issues affecting services to Canadians. It provides no protection at all for employees. Where is the bill going with all that? Canada Post wants to privatize, but why? What will it achieve with all that? How could it improve the services to Canadians? Will people in small and remote communities benefit from such a measure? Will this bill give anything more to those in my riding whose post offices have been closed and services altered drastically? Will those who are older or disabled have to go from one place to another? Will they benefit from such a bill? Absolutely not. I know that privatization can be good in some cases but very harmful in others; it can be most unfortunate. Ask the Air Canada employees who are in front of the House of Commons today how many jobs have been lost since Air Canada was privatized. How many jobs will still be lost? These questions should also be raised here and answered. Also consider all the difficulties they had in getting access to the private sector so that they could have healthy competition with the other sectors that interest them.