

Government Orders

I want to go back and let people recall the privatization of Air Canada. There is a pattern to privatization. Senior managers and corporations always love to push for privatization because they always seem to manage to set up privatization deals that give them a good hunk of shares, a good stake in the company which means the loss of jobs and less income for those who actually do the work that produces the profits.

I want to go back to Air Canada because I remember with great chagrin the night I heard Claude Taylor, just before the privatization of Air Canada, on *Cross Country Check-Up* saying that if only he were free of all these fetters of government ownership, of government direction, he could run Air Canada much better, much more profitably. I suspect that the privatization of Air Canada benefited Claude Taylor and a lot of other senior executives in Air Canada.

It has meant the loss of thousands of jobs. It has meant the loss of service to northern and remote communities in this country. It has meant increased costs. It has meant reduced service and it is a classic demonstration of why privatization in an industry like transportation or communication, that is so essential to keeping this country together, is not in the public interest.

The public interest is something that does not seem to matter a lot to this government or to Canada Post.

• (1640)

I can only mention small postal outlets in my riding, 10 to 20 feet from a senior citizens' building, being closed down and moved a mile away. These older people who are trying to live on their own, 190 of them in one apartment building, who want to be able to communicate with family and friends who have now moved all over Canada, cannot even get out in the winter to mail a letter, to pick up some stamps, to mail a parcel at Christmas time.

This is happening all over my riding. I have in my riding the second highest proportion of seniors in the country and so I worry about these things. I wish Canada Post worried about people who have to rely on the mail simply to remain in touch with their loved ones. It does not. It does not even make sensible decisions.

I have a branch of the post office that has been out on Richmond Road in Ottawa West for many years, since I moved out to that part of the city. Lo and behold, 100 feet down the road it opened up a private outlet. What does that mean? Better service to me? No. Now I have to go to two places.

Our time is short today but the bottom line is we want a postal service that delivers service to Canadians, one whose purpose is not profits, not exploitation of its workers but service to Canadians. We want the honest truth for once from this government on its intentions. Do not give us a shell of a bill that does not tell us what its real plans are.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Madam Speaker, I too want to participate in the debate on Bill C-73. As I do, let me say the speech by my colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa West, was an absolutely outstanding speech because it embraced what is important about Canada Post for the whole country.

The member pointed out that Canada Post is not only an essential ingredient to nation building, holding the country together in so far as rural Canada is concerned, but is important for those citizens who have made their contribution to this country, those senior citizens, particularly in urban Canada, who now find for economic reasons that they must live in senior citizens' complexes. Canada Post is a way of staying in touch with their loved ones no matter where they have gone.

I thought the member demonstrated why Canada Post is an ingredient of national unity at a time when the country is being tested, when the stresses and strains on the fabric of this nation are more pronounced than perhaps at any other time in our history.

As my colleague from Bonavista—Trinity—Conception said a few moments ago, thousands of people gathered in various communities of Newfoundland and perhaps elsewhere in this country, demanding that their voices be heard, demanding that there be an opportunity for their voices to echo across this Chamber, demanding that their fears, their anger, their frustrations and their hopes be reflected in the voices of their members of this place by way of an emergency debate in the case of Newfoundland on the fishery.