

Government Orders

going to close because, they have been told, the natural opportunity has come to replace the postmaster and postmistress. As I have said in the House, this happened in the Prime Minister's riding and on five occasions the post office was not closed.

As if to add insult to injury, it does not give the public much confidence. I do not like zeroing in on individual members, but one government member was so frustrated that he had to rise in the House of Commons and basically castigate his own government. I am talking about the member for South Shore who on February 19 made a statement about the latest business of having to pay 43 cents to relocate mail.

There are 400,000 Canadians who move every year. This means that service will not be provided. It is incredible. In fact it is so frustrating that the member for South Shore said on February 19 that there were no limits to the ways Canada Post would go to infuriate the Canadian public, and the public is infuriated. He went on to say:

It is nonsense. It is an outrage with which Canadians will simply not put up, nor should they. This measure will not result in Canada Post getting its revenues in order. It will simply result in a lot of mail being thrown out that should be delivered.

This is a member of the government castigating his own government and the efforts of Canada Post.

In wrapping up I can only say that in viewing the mandate of Canada Post, in the words of the Prime Minister to provide a better and improved service to the public, it has not been met. It would appear that the government is taking every step it can to make sure this aim is not achieved.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to speak on report stage of Bill C-73, in essence a bill that would be a first step toward the privatization of Canada Post.

The people of Canada, especially the people of the regions of Canada, are very well aware of the effects of privatization when it comes to service whenever this government has privatized in any way, shape or form. I remind them of what happened to prices in the airline industry and to the fiasco we are in now after Air Canada was privatized. Do the people of my riding pay less for their fares? No, they do not. They pay a very high price for transportation because the private companies are busy trying to promote flights outside the country. As a

result it is cheaper to fly to Florida from Sudbury or to fly to Europe from Toronto than it is to fly from Sudbury to Toronto. I venture to say that privatization of Canada Post would lead in the very same direction.

The services of Canada Post have certainly deteriorated in past years. There is no doubt in my mind that the latest blow has been the advent of the twin boxes which are supposed to be more efficient. The people of Canada will know what twin boxes mean. If they have a piece of local mail they put it in one box and if they have a piece of mail to go anywhere outside the area they put it in another box.

All the mail for northeastern Ontario used to be sorted in Sudbury. Of course that is not done any more. Apparently it is far more efficient to take all mail and ship it to Ottawa so that it can be shipped back to all outlying areas and municipalities.

With the advent of these twin boxes we thought the local mail would be distributed in a more timely fashion. Let me recount some of the things that have happened since the advent of these twin boxes. It appears that any local mail deposited in the box on Friday afternoon, Friday evening or Saturday in essence is also shipped to Ottawa. If you think a letter posted in Sudbury on a Friday night or Saturday will get to its destination on Monday, that is local mail, think again. It is not likely to get there much before Wednesday or Thursday. I am told it is somewhat more efficient to ship all of that mail to Ottawa and have it sorted here because they have these brand spanking new machines that can sort mail very quickly. What they have forgotten is that you have to get it there and back. So the mail is just not getting where it is supposed to go the way it used to.

• (1215)

What has happened to service? We sure pay for it, but are we getting it? In another attempt to save money, a large number of postal boxes were eliminated because it was too costly to collect mail from all these boxes. In some instances, I am sure that it was. We have areas in our country where a high level of seniors live. They have very few ways of mailing and paying their bills. They now have far more difficulty getting to the postal boxes.

I have one instance where there are a number of high rise apartment buildings in a fairly small area together. The postal outlet has been moved. I have had petitions complaining of this, that now they have to walk down