This is a point that has been made by other speakers in this debate as well, and it is a point that I think bears some consideration. Certainly the record of the government in this regard is very clear. For example, the first step in the privatization of Air Canada was a share offering to the employees. In a sense what we had there was a template that is just being applied to Canada Post in this instance.

However, I would like the hon. member to take this one step further and consider, should the government after the promulgation of this bill take subsequent further steps to effect a complete privatization of Canada Post, to what degree she would think it likely that the buyers of the privatized Canada Post would in fact be large American courier firms.

Is she aware of any firms engaged in businesses like the delivery of mail, in other words Canadian courier firms, that are of a size and capacity sufficient even to contemplate swallowing so huge a corporation as Canada Post? Or, would it not be natural to assume that the only companies on this continent capable of such a giant lunge at the public trough would in fact be the American courier giants?

Mrs. Gaffney: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member from the New Democratic Party. I think he has made an excellent point.

In response to a question just like that one the other day, the hon. Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons said that the privatization of Canada Post would require separate legislation to come back to this House and that there would be ample opportunity for us to make a choice between private ownership or state ownership when that came up.

However, I think the member of the New Democratic Party is asking whether I perceive an American company moving into Canada or who do I see taking over the privatization? It could very well be an American company, but it also could very well be a Canadian company.

If I could go one step further than that, we as Canadians have been up until this point in time subsidizing Canada Post. There is no way on God's green earth we can ever have a postal service, whether it is publicly or privately owned, that is not going to be subsidized by the government of this country. I really believe that and that is because of the immensity of this country and of far-reaching outposts.

I would much rather subsidize a publicly owned Canada Post corporation than a privately owned Canada Post corporation. I certainly would not want to subsidize an American owned private corporation that is running our Canada Post.

Mr. Lee Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in her remarks the member made reference to the back-to-work legislation passed by the House last fall and said that in fact it had not been implemented. Could she tell us what part of the back-to-work legislation has yet to be implemented?

Mrs. Gaffney: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is referring to my comments with regard to what back-to-work legislation was not implemented. Is that what he is saying?

Mr. Richardson: Yes.

Mrs. Gaffney: I am sorry, I do not have my back-up notes here and I cannot answer that question.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, in entering into the debate on Bill C-73 this afternoon I would like to start, if I may, by quoting some of its directly pertinent elements.

As members will know but as may have thus far escaped those who have been condemned to watch this on television, the bill seeks to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act, in other words that act which has established the Canada Post corporation and under which the corporation operates.

It would seek basically at its heart to insert new sections into the act which would provide for the creation of shares and the dispersing of up to 10 per cent of those shares to the employees of Canada Post Corporation. It would provide as well for the statutory regime necessary for the administration of this sort of thing.

• (1410)

The key elements in this bill can be found in proposed section 27.1(5) which reads:

> (5) Not more than ten per cent of the issued and outstanding shares of the Corporation may be held or beneficially owned by the employees of the Corporation.