

The end of July 1992 is going to mark the third year that postal workers have been without a collective agreement. This has not been for a lack of trying. It has been for a lack of commitment on the government's part to honour agreements which should be honoured.

We are not going to change that kind of distrust that develops as a result of the actions of this government through a 10 per cent share offering. This piece of legislation is not going to do the job it is intended to do. It is a smoke-screen. It is only one step further along the government's agenda to privatize Canada Post and to sell off the assets.

It is because of this that my colleagues and I cannot support this legislation. It is because of this that we remain vitally concerned about the future of other postal operations, not only in my region, in the Okanagan-Shuswap, but right across Canada in the many rural communities. There are many outlets still which have not been closed but which we know have been targeted.

I am concerned about the rural outlets in my community and in the north of my riding in the Okanagan-Shuswap, the community of Canoe. It is my understanding that particular postal outlet has been targeted as well as other outlets in my own constituency.

We cannot continue with this process. We cannot continue with throwing people out of work, with cutting the heart and life-blood away from the communities that these post offices have served. This is a vital issue. It is an issue on which people in the interior of British Columbia, in the interior of Alberta, in the interior of Saskatchewan, of Manitoba, of Ontario and right across this country have said to the government that what it is doing is wrong.

There may be some reason, some rationalization, for the offering of retail services. For gosh sakes, let us not tear apart the community structures that have become very much a part and parcel of our Canadian way of life. This government does not understand rural Canada. It does not understand small-town Canada. The reason for that is that the people who are setting the agenda for this government are the corporate élite of this country. It is Bay Street that speaks for the corporate agenda of this country.

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It does not understand what it means in a small community in the interior of British Columbia, in the community of Enderby, in the community of Penticton, in the community of Westwold, in the community of Canoe. It does not understand what it means to take a post office away from the people and divvy up the outlet to a store or another retail facility. It changes the nature of that community. People have said that time and time again and I wish that the government could understand the dynamics that take place when it does that to our small communities.

We looked at the same thing with the loss of services in the RCMP. Thank goodness we had 19 members of this caucus from the province of British Columbia who stood up and were accounted for and supported their communities in getting those RCMP services back into the communities where they belonged. It was only because of the strong voice of those committed members from British Columbia that we were able to convince this government to undo the damage it was about to do.

I only wish that we could convince this government of the same thing with respect to post offices. For gosh sakes, do not go any further. You have gone too far already, do not close any more urban or rural outlets, particularly the outlets in our smaller communities because it is cutting the heart out of those communities. That is why we cannot support this legislation.

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment and then follow it up with a question.

I guess what this legislation does seems to be common sense. Some 10 years ago Canada Post drained each year about \$600 million from taxpayers to support it. Over those 10 years there has been a turn around in which Canada Post is now paying a dividend. Other than this year, in which we have had a disruptive strike, there has been a turn around and it is now paying a dividend.

What was part of the reason for this turn around? I would suggest to the hon. member that it probably has a lot to do with the employees, both managers and the workers for Canada Post. If I were working for a company or a corporation that had that great a turn around, I would like to share in some of the profits. It