

*Government Orders*

However, in its first budget after the 1984 election, the government, through the Minister of Finance, said that from now on the corporation would have to absorb its own deficit. That is the kind of measure the minister took. That is what the privatization issue was all about. We know how disastrous that has been.

• (1350)

Since then I do not think that the postal services have improved, even though the government claims they have. A greater number of Canadians receive their mail in green boxes or superboxes, and many others no longer get postal services in rural areas. Mr. Speaker, this is very serious.

Now the government wants us to believe that Bill C-73, which would give 10 per cent of the net worth of Canada Post to its employees, could promote harmony and peace in the labour relations within that Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that Bill C-73 can solve the problem that exists within Canada Post.

The corporation is an essential service for all Canadians. The moment you start privatizing everything— We saw what happened with the railways and with Air Canada. Mr. Speaker, everything that was created to help us identify as Canadians is being destroyed.

It is certainly easy to privatize postal services in Montreal and Toronto, given the volume in those large cities. But what happens to Canadians living in sparsely populated regions such as the north or the east? Do you think the private sector will keep providing equal services for everybody? Should we not, as Canadians, at least have access to the same postal services? I have nothing against the private businesses; they are there to make profits and pay dividends to their shareholders. This is how it works in the business world. The government would privatize Canada Post Corporation tomorrow if it had the support of Canadians. Just think of the symbolism of the post office in a small community. In some areas, it is the only federal symbol; yet, the government wants to close it down.

It even removed the words "Canada Post" on the boxes, at this crucial time for our country. My colleagues and I will support the motion of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell asking that this bill be read a second time in six months, in the hope that the minister responsible for the Canada Post Corporation will change his mind, come to his senses, withdraw this bill, and give Canada Post the necessary leeway to improve its relations with its employees and the consumers, in order to try to provide a better service to Canadians.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, to add to what my colleague just said, if this amendment is adopted by the House, we could have an election almost immediately, since it would indicate a lack of confidence in Her Majesty's government. We could therefore have an election that would give Canadians the opportunity to choose a new government that would do a much better job than this one.

[*English*]

What I wanted to talk about today are the problems this bill has posed for Canadians and they are serious problems because the bill is trying to create false expectations out of the post office.

I do not know who could have thought up this scheme.

**An hon. member:** Harvie Andre.

**Mr. Milliken:** No doubt it was the government House leader who is, after all, responsible for Canada Post in this House. This is probably one of his privatization brainwaves that he picked up along with the Minister of State for Finance and Privatization who is running this privatization department.

The person they should privatize and get out of public life is the minister responsible for Canada Post, the government House leader. If he could be privatized that would be very good. We could have an election and he could be privatized by the votes of the people of his constituency in Calgary and we would not have to go through a share offering.

What the government is proposing in this case, the minister has put this forward in a serious way apparently, is to privatize part of Canada Post.