

been up until now. That plan is a type of blackmail. The Government is saying to this woman that unless your wage is cut to one-fifth of what it was before, the post office will be taken out of your community. Right now it is a Mexican stand-off in that the woman has stated that she will not accept that type of wage, and the Post Office is delaying its decision to cut off her salary on a day-by-day basis. That is not a satisfactory situation. We want to have a commitment for service at the Post Office. We want a commitment to rural Canadian life. Rural Canadians are fed up with services being cut because of policies of centralization, whether it involves schools, municipalities, or health and social services. They do not wish this to happen with the Post Office. They do not wish the nail in the coffin of rural Canada to be driven in by the Conservative Government.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, tonight I am making my maiden speech as the recently appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs; I take this opportunity to thank the Right Hon. Prime Minister for having such confidence in me and I assure my Minister of my full support.

Madam Speaker, I should like to answer to my friend the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Keeper) by saying that few observers dispute the need for Canada Post Corporation to change its course in order to offer Canadians the quality service they have every right to expect. For that matter, Canada Post Corporation is assuming this responsibility very seriously.

Madam Speaker, the nature of these changes has been stated by Canadians several times, from the tabling of the Marchmont Report to the most recent public opinion polls. Consequently, Canada Post Corporation has developed a plan to provide Canadians with the improved services which they have every right to expect both as customers and as taxpayers. Contrary to my friend, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre, I suggest this is not beating about the bush but getting straight to the point.

Many changes are being planned. Their purpose is to offer more reliable services, so that Canadians may have their mail delivered according to well-defined standards, to adapt to the delivery requirements in the new suburbs by adopting methods similar to those currently used in other countries, to facilitate the transactions between Canadians and Canada Post Corporation by increasing the number of sales outlets operated by its private sector partners, while ensuring that the postal rates increases do not exceed the inflation rate and by putting an end to the Government subsidies paid to an already profitable organization.

As you know, Madam Speaker, the difference in costs between the Corporation and the private sector is one of the main reasons which warrant franchising as a solution for

offering Canadians a greater number of sales outlets where they can purchase stamps and obtain other goods and services.

Canada Post Corporation, however, understands quite well that changes such as the increased involvement of the private sector through franchising must come in a way which protects the interests of its employees.

That is why it has been proposed that this change, which by the way will increase the number of sales outlets by 50 per cent, will come about over a ten year period.

• (1835)

That is also why Canada Post did accept in principle the job security provisions recommended by Commissioner-Conciliator Claude Foisy in his report on the dispute between Canada Post Corporation and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

Pursuant to these recommendations, not a single postal worker would lose his job as a result of the opening of a franchised or sub post office, provided he would be prepared to accept alternate employment within the corporation.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, franchising is the logical way to improve postal services and make them more readily accessible to Canadians. In fact it is the outcome of ongoing co-operation with the private sector which is far from being new. It has been decades now since Canada Post has been working in co-operation with the private sector, and this association has always proved to be most rewarding.

[English]

NUCLEAR ENERGY—REPORTED DESIGN FLAWS IN UNITED STATES PERRY NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Madam Speaker, ever since the accident last year at the Chernobyl nuclear generating station in the Soviet Union, our world has changed. That particular accident was not the first accident there has ever been at a nuclear generating station; there have been others. For instance, I think of the Seven Islands incident in the United States. However, at the same time Chernobyl was different from anything that came before it.

We are well aware that the fall-out from the accident at Chernobyl obviously affected the health of all those who worked at the plant. It affected the health of all neighbours who lived near the Chernobyl generating station. Of course it affected the health of the clean-up crews. It had a potential effect on the health of visitors in the area including many, many Canadians. In addition, it had a potential impact on the health of people around the world because of the fall-out from the accident at the Chernobyl generating station.

All of that has caused great changes in our thinking and in the way we approach our concerns about nuclear energy and nuclear generating stations. I think, for instance, of the change in the thinking of military strategists. I am told by some that the Chernobyl incident had an enormous impact on their thinking.