

Government Orders

There are billions of dollars being spent by Canadians. There are billions of dollars in revenue being lost to Canada Post for the simple reason that the Canadian public does not trust the services of Canada Post. They do not trust the services of Canada Post because of the internal friction, in part.

Any initiative that can be seen as a potential for resolving some of those difficulties that occur internally in Canada Post is going to benefit the employees of Canada Post in the long run. That will lead to the improvement of the internal relations of Canada Post so that it can become more productive and more competitive. This will bring in some of that revenue that is being lost to other persons who are providing the services that Canada Post can provide.

Job security has been, for a number of years, the number one concern among the unions representing the workers of Canada Post. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers and the former Letter Carriers Union always talked about job security.

It is very strange to me that in an industry that is expanding across this country every day that the courier services are providing increased services and hiring people. Given that situation, why would an organization already in the field of providing delivery services be concerned about job security? The reason is that it is not attracting the business. If it attracted the business, it would have the job security.

The Parliament of Canada has to help Canada Post and its employees overcome these difficulties. That, hopefully, is the purpose of this bill.

I am willing to ask my colleagues to take another leap of faith to benefit Canada Post for all of Canada, but especially for the employees of Canada Post. I could, in the time remaining to me, chart all my complaints about Canada Post. I could talk about the closure of the post office at the Head of St. Margarets Bay that became a national event recorded by the CBC. It was complete with cameras and reporters. It was the funeral that was instituted to mark the closure of the Head of St. Margarets Bay post office in the federal constituency of Halifax West. I am concerned more recently at the closure of the post office in the town of Bedford. It is one

of the most enterprising and progressive towns in Nova Scotia and it lost its postal service. However it was replaced by a more efficient service, I hope. Again we take that leap of faith.

I accept these things and I hope people accept these things as part of the leap of faith that in the end we will have an effective postal service in Canada that will provide each and every Canadian with the services that they demand and are entitled to at reasonable cost. I believe that Canada Post has the capacity and the potential ability to provide effective services to all Canadians at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers. As far as I am concerned this means no deficit.

What is our role in all this process? It is to make sure that Canada Post has the statutory instruments to allow reaching that goal. It is not for the benefit of the management of Canada Post or for the edification of the president of Canada Post and the staff he gathers around him, but for the benefit primarily of the people who are involved in the operation of Canada Post whose careers depend upon the success of Canada Post. They literally feed and take care of the welfare of their families because of the employment income they receive. In broader terms this is for the benefit of all Canadians.

Anything that we can do to enhance the efforts of Canada Post in making it an organization that functions effectively and efficiently will be well received by all Canadians who will get the benefit in the end.

We have to put aside those difficulties that have been caused in the past, whether it is in Halifax West, the Head of St. Margarets Bay, the town of Bedford, Kingston or wherever. We must hope that we can come up with some initiative or policy that will enhance Canada Post for the benefit of all Canadians.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I see the hon. member rising but he has already spoken on the bill. We are now in the period where there are only 10-minute speeches and no questions or comments.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, if the 10 minutes have not been used up then surely a question can be put to the hon. member in the course of his speech. I did not hear you say that the member had finished his time.