

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

• (1600)

[English]

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Earlier today when you were in the chair the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader rose in his place and sought unanimous consent to move a motion dealing with a matter to come before the House later today. You indicated that there was no unanimous consent. I was in the Chamber at the time and I did not hear a dissenting voice.

I draw your attention to the *Précis of Procedure*, pages 63 and 64 which states that the vote on the motion, whether it has been debated or not, is put by the Speaker asking: "Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?" If there is no dissenting voice, the motion carries.

It is the tradition, or at least it has been the tradition in this House that if a member objects to a request for unanimous consent an audible no is heard. It ensures that all members regardless of where they are seated in the Chamber are aware of that no and do not rely solely on the hearing or visual ability of the Speaker.

I am not looking for a ruling at the moment. I am not challenging any decision that has been made. I would ask you to examine this issue, Mr. Speaker, to see whether or not it is appropriate for the Speaker to see the shaking of a head and take that as direction of consent or non-consent when a matter is put before the House.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I wish to thank the hon. member for his courtesy in notifying me that he intended to raise this point of order. I want to reassure him, after making inquiries and referring to the tradition of our rules, that it is left to the discretion of the Chair to determine whether or not there is unanimity, since it is not a yes or no vote. Presumably, a deaf mute member could refuse unanimous consent in some non-verbal way, if you allow me that example.

That being said, I want to reassure the hon. member that I am certain the House was not unanimous on the motion that had been presented. I take note of the member's request and may investigate further, but I wish to reassure him right away that there was no unanimity. Even if it was not expressed verbally, I was able to see that with my own eyes.

*[English]***CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT**

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-73, an act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act, as reported (with amendments) by a legislative committee; and Motions Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak briefly on this bill and raise a number of issues.

Our concern on this side of the House is that this is simply another move in the privatization of Canada Post. In our view it is a serious enough situation already that we have seen the closing down of rural post offices, the destruction of rural community life and the removal of the visible sign of the presence of the nation in many of the communities of our country.

The minister has said in this House on a number of occasions that this is not part of a privatization move. However, it is extremely difficult to believe that when we have seen various steps toward privatization. We have seen the government increasingly removing itself from any responsibility for the actions, the service or lack of service of Canada Post.

I give one example. Junk mail is of significant concern to a large number of Canadians. They are concerned about the environment and concerned about having to deal with extra pounds of paper that are put into their mailboxes every week unsolicited. They have no way of legally refusing that even when it is delivered by Canada Post. I wrote to the minister some time ago and asked why Canadians cannot have the right to refuse what they describe as junk mail. We all know what we mean, advertising flyers and so on, something that has nothing to do with mail, directed to that person but whose sole purpose is to sell.

• (1605)

The minister wrote back and said Canada Post has to deliver every piece of mail delivered to it. Of course it does because the law says so. That is why I wrote to the minister. The minister of the Crown is responsible for