

Government Orders

discuss with the people, the customers, how they would be affected by the decisions that were being taken.

It is this kind of attitude that causes so much frustration on the part of Canadians. After all, and I think quite rightly so, when they buy a postage stamp they feel that they are paying a tax and that they are entitled to a level of service that reflects the fact that the post office exists not for the good of the management, not for the good of the executives, but for the good of Canadians for whom that it is intended to serve.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, like my colleagues in the opposition, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-73. At the outset, let us put things in their proper place. The purpose of Bill C-73 is not to privatize Canada Post. This bill does not privatize Canada Post. It seeks to encourage employees to share in the profits of that corporation. Nevertheless, it is surprising to hear the opposition again trying to make the Canadian public believe, through disinformation, that we are privatizing Canada Post. If we were going to privatize Canada Post and if it could be privatized at this time, that would mean Canada Post is profitable in a way that shares could be sold and give a favourable rate of return.

What can the opposition have against this bill? What can the opposition have against the government presenting a bill that finally makes it possible for employees to buy shares in the company and share in its profits? What can the opposition have against something that the labour movement has been promoting for 20 or 30 years? For 20 or 30 years unions have been demanding that employees be considered an integral part of the company and share in its profits. We have been hearing that for 20 or 30 years and now that we are doing it, the opposition, in its traditional role of opposing everything, says that it is against this bill and accuses the government of wanting to use it as a way to privatize Canada Post. That is disinformation.

• (1325)

However, we must clearly understand the philosophy of our friends opposite and of our union leaders. Let me quote you a clause, B-6, from the national by-laws and

policies adopted at the national convention in 1990. Clause B-6 says: "In line with opposition to industrial democracy, the union condemns any and all attempts by labour bodies to establish a partnership between labour and government or between labour, government and employers. Within the trade union movement, the union wants to promote and strengthen a militant and combative front with which to oppose any form of collaboration with management and government serving management's interests".

A little further, in Clause B-7 of the same document, we read: "—update a militant program of action for the labour movement geared to building the fighting strengths of the labour movement against the employer and government".

When such clauses exist in the national by-laws of unions representing the employees of Canada Post, we should really not be surprised that union leaders systematically oppose a bill whose sole purpose, I repeat, is to enable Canada Post employees to buy shares and share in the profits of the corporation.

The fundamental role of union leaders is to serve their members well. When we ask union leaders whether they will recommend that their members use this new plan, which is good for them because with it they can share in the company's profits and thus make more money, they answer that they will not recommend it because they would be co-operating with the employer and the government. The national by-laws of these unions forbid doing so. They have even set up a program showing union members never to co-operate with the employer. Then people tell us about the state of labour relations between the management of Canada Post and the union.

There are several examples of industrial democracy in Quebec, with Cascades Paper and other companies that have set up plans whereby employees share in their profits. Of course if you work for a company and are convinced that by working very hard with the other employees and helping the company make more money you will add to your income, in addition to your hourly or weekly wages, that is very motivating for the employees. I am very sorry that the opposition, again, and the unions through their leaders oppose a measure that leaves it