

*Government Orders*

and then simply defer all the major decisions that directly impact on their financial well-being, especially with this Treasury Board and cabinet.

I do not know a single investor who would be willing to sit back hoping everything will go well and knowing that when things turn sour whatever he has to say will go nowhere because his voting power is nil.

[*Translation*]

It is pretty obvious the Conservative government is trying to get out of the fix it is in by selling shares to Canada Post employees. Canadians know for a fact that something is definitely wrong at Canada Post. However, to let them pay the bill without giving them any power or guarantees in return is rather close to being obscene.

[*English*]

We do not only have to debate the philosophical implications of this bill. We must also discuss the practical. When embarking on this kind of venture I believe Parliament must be provided with the specifics. To be frank, this bill does not provide us with any details at all.

We have to ask ourselves why this legislation does not disclose the value of the Canada Post corporation. How are we as parliamentarians supposed to know the value of the shares being sold? We know that it is 10 per cent, but 10 per cent of what?

We also have no idea how much each share will be worth. We have no idea how accessible this program will be to the average worker at Canada Post. If there are very few shares then this will not benefit the employees of the corporation to any great measure. If on the other hand, the number of shares put into public hands grows quite large the fears of the Canadian public and the members of the Liberal Party that this ideologically driven Conservative Party will privatize Canada Post would have been realized.

Liberals oppose the privatization of Canada Post. We believe that essential public services such as mail delivery belong in public hands.

I think that members on the other side must forget exactly how vast this country is. They forget that profit motive does not take into account service in very remote parts of our country. How does this government intend

to guarantee continued, high quality service to the northern parts of Quebec and the territories if the private sector is allowed to take over this essential public service? That is why we opposed the recommendations of the consumer and corporate affairs committee when it tried to privatize Canada Post. It is very difficult to understand the committee's recommendation. It is very difficult to understand why it recommends an eventual privatization of the corporation while at the same time it says that industrial relations must be improved first.

When one considers the fact that the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is fundamentally opposed to the privatization of Canada Post one must question the government's commitment to improving labour-management relations.

As I mentioned earlier, such an action contributes to the destruction of our national symbols. It is destroying the ties that bind Canada into one nation. Even the actions of the corporation in recent years have shied away from promoting the national nature of Canada Post.

People in my constituency of Saint-Laurent—Cartierville have asked me to explain why the maple leaf and the Canadian flag have disappeared from our mail boxes. They have been asking me why they have disappeared from all material related to Canada Post. What do we have now to represent our national postal carrier? To tell the truth I am not exactly sure what it is. I think it is an envelope with wings, but I am not sure.

If the intent of this bill is to improve morale at the post office it is clear that the bill is completely ineffective. If the government was truly interested in improving morale, it would insist on improving labour-management relations by dealing fairly and equitably with the employees of Canada Post.

If the objective of Bill C-73 is to improve the quality of service we get at the post office it has clearly failed. There is absolutely nothing there. Not only has the service not improved, but the corporation is also losing money.

We must conclude that this is the first step in privatization, something that the minister responsible for Canada Post said he clearly supports. We in the Liberal party clearly condemn this action and we will fight it.