

*Government Orders*

Corporation. They should be entitled to elect, as a class, a director or directors to represent their interests on the board of directors.

They should have a market for their shares. We have no idea what the government may have in mind with respect to this. Since the bill does specify that the shares can only be held by employees of the corporation, the government needs to create in that context a market so that people can dispose of their shares if they need the money. They should be able to know how much they can get for their shares or at least how that price is going to be calculated.

These minority shareholders should have the right possibly to have their director approve certain types of decisions. Finally, if this kind of system is going to work, as a minimum it absolutely requires the support and the participation of the union representatives of the employees.

I will go back to the example of Canadian Airlines where the employee share purchase arrangement is contributing a great deal to the equity of that corporation. Each of the unions at Canadian Airlines has agreed and is participating fully in a co-operative way with that initiative by the employees' council.

It seems to me that to start this share scheme without the co-operation of the unions at Canada Post dooms it to failure. Instead of creating a situation of greater co-operation, of greater mutual understanding, it creates the potential for different kinds of divisions. If this is the path that the government chooses to go, then the warning from my colleague from Thunder Bay—Atikokan a moment ago may be correct, that in fact this is a kind of executive compensation scheme. It is not any kind of employee participation plan whatsoever.

For that reason, there should also be a limit on the number of and percentage of these shares which can be taken up by senior executive officers of Canada Post Corporation. If they are not there for the rank and file employee and if those people are not taking up the shares voluntarily in a situation in which they feel that their rights are protected, this scheme is not likely to work.

Even if you take the position that these shares should be made available to employees of Canada Post, the scheme the government has put forward is filled with points that are uncertain and not clear. I cannot see

where they intend to end up. I suggest that this is not going to improve employee relations at Canada Post Corporation.

While I am on my feet, I have to say that in many ways, dealing with issues related to Canada Post have been among the most difficult I have confronted over the last four years. Canada Post Corporation has pursued the mandate that it operate profitably without sufficient regard for its mandate of public service. If in fact some others have said that this plan is really a plan to move Canada Post Corporation toward the day when it is privately owned, then I fear for the ideals of service to the public which seem to me to be fundamental and of primary importance to the mandate of Canada Post Corporation.

• (1320)

All of us have experienced the closing of retail postal outlets in our constituencies. Very frequently well-mannered and well-meaning people from Canada Post Corporation come to try and relay the news to members of Parliament and other people in the community. However, the decision makers hide behind walls, never coming into the community to understand the impact of what they are doing firsthand. I suspect there is a group of MBAs somewhere in the Canada Post Corporation who never go out into the communities. They look at maps and draw circles on them based on where population centres are and say: "Let us put a postal outlet here and let us close that one".

There is a seniors building in my constituency where the postal outlet beside the building was closed. They were forced to go to a new one over two miles away and across two bridges. That is an example of that failure to give consideration to the make-up of the local community.

There is the recent closing of public access to Station T in Ottawa. Members may know it has long been the main postal terminal in Ottawa. It has been a focal point for individual service as well as commercial service for many years. Access to transportation, parking and everything that has been there is suddenly closed and restricted to commercial users only without consultation with the community. I admit there was an effort to communicate to the community the fact that the decision had been made but the decision makers were never taken out from behind the thick walls and put out in the community to