

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, unfortunately, this bill does nothing to improve postal services for the people of this country. Canadians want our postal system to improve its delivery of postal services.

[*English*]

Canada Post is one of a long list of institutions that this government has gutted. It has limited home delivery by setting up supermailboxes. It has viciously attacked the fibre of our rural areas by eliminating many local post offices. It is little wonder Canadians are going through a type of identity crisis.

Members on the other side are convinced that the best way to build our nation is by destroying and dismantling the very things that bind us as a nation.

The government has wounded VIA Rail. It has slashed the CBC and it has begun the privatization of Canada Post. Members on this side of the House will never stand for this kind of action. We will oppose it because it is bad for Canada Post and because it is not in the interests of all Canadians.

We have to wonder why this government did not take the opportunity when it introduced this legislation to address all the problems involved with Canada Post.

All of us on this side of the House are in touch with our constituents and realize that the problems of this Crown corporation have to be addressed with the best interests of all Canadians in mind.

The minister responsible for Canada Post said that he believed this plan would be good for morale at the corporation. His argument is that if morale at the post office would improve then the service would improve. I have news for this minister. The employees who he claims will be thrilled because of this legislation have said no thanks. The union has said that the best shares in Canada Post are their wages. The employees want to have a new contract that will respect their needs and rights.

• (1250)

I am particularly concerned that this bill will do nothing about the conversions and closures of post

offices that have caused so many problems around the country.

While money might be the only thing on the government's mind, I believe that in this country the post office is an essential public service. I feel that we must provide equally efficient and proper service throughout the country.

I urge the government to take this opportunity to address the problems associated with a postal service that is only interested in looking at the bottom line, and I am not talking about the postal code. We need to put people first. If this government is not willing to take on that challenge, those of us on this side of the House are.

[*Translation*]

Postal services are essential to everyone in this country, from the business community in large urban centres to the child living in a remote part of this immense continent. The government can hardly expect this bill to do anything to solve the problems facing our post offices across the country.

The intentions behind Bill C-73 may, and I stress the word "may", be good, but there is considerable uncertainty among those directly concerned by this legislation. There is every indication that once we start going this route, other measures will follow and there will be no turning back.

Giving employees a chance to buy shares in the Canada Post Corporation may be praiseworthy in itself, but I must admit I find it very hard to believe the government is acting in good faith.

Does it really expect to be taken seriously when it says: "Sure, you can buy shares and you will be really part of Canada Post, but no voting rights, so no say in decision making".

[*English*]

Can anyone in this House possibly imagine what the shareholders of any major company would say if they were presented with such a proposal? Does anyone seriously believe that people who have put up their hard earned money, the ones who have accepted to foot the bill, must be muzzled when decisions are taken?

It is simply ridiculous that members opposite would take such action. No one can afford to purchase shares