

*Routine Proceedings*

da, a Crown corporation. The main reason for selling shares in Petro-Canada, with which I also have some disagreement but I will not get into that debate today, was that Petro-Canada needed more money and the government was not prepared to make any further investments.

We have not heard that evidence from Canada Post. In fact, we have seen just the contrary. The evidence provided to us in the annual reports of the corporation indicate that, not only is Canada Post making a profit in this last fiscal year, but it is going to continue making profits, to turn some of those profits back into the corporation for new technology, and, in turn, to make a rebate to the federal government. If this committee report is to be accepted, in the neighbourhood of 40 per cent of that profit will go back to the government.

At no time has this Crown corporation or the government indicated that Canada Post is in need of greater capital investment from the Canadian public through the government. Now, a committee of the government, without testimony to the contrary, is advocating to the government that it go ahead and sell shares in Canada Post and privatize the operation. And for what purpose? No good purpose, I maintain.

The report completely ignores the majority of the testimony that we heard over the course of that six months. At one point, I was very strongly considering advocating that the committee stop work on the report that it was drafting, go back to the drawing-board, and prepare another report that reflected in greater detail the evidence that had been presented before us. The committee did not do that. As a result, I felt very strongly that I had to do some work to try to set out what I believe would be an efficient, well operated, publicly owned Crown corporation delivering the mail across the country.

I have released a report, part of which was tabled with the main report. It is called: *Canada's Post: A report of the New Democratic Party on the Future of our National Postal System*. This report indicates that the government and Canadians have choices to make—choices about what kind of a national postal system we really want; choices that will relate to the needs of Canadians today and tomorrow; choices that will allow us to have full postal service in rural areas delivered by people who are

accountable to the Crown corporation and who are ensuring that the needs of their communities are well fulfilled.

One of the things that I propose in my report is the creation of a permanent full-time Canada Post commission that will administer the Crown corporation in a way that adheres to the mandate that Parliament and the people of Canada gave it in 1981. A Crown corporation with full accountability to Canadian people is the absolute necessary bottom line.

We should create a permanent, full-time Canada Post commission, established to oversee the operations of Canada Post, and whose prime function should be to ensure that the corporation adheres to its mandate in the context of placing accessible, quality service for all Canadians as a first priority.

The commission should be directed by a board composed with equitable representation from the rural organizations which are being ignored by the government. As we know, the representatives from Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and other rural areas were basically told by the committee and by the government that they were wrong.

• (1130)

There must be representation from consumer organizations, the people who work for Canada Post within the postal unions, representatives of small business and big business, seniors and the disabled on this commission to ensure that when we have situations where supermail-boxes are absolutely essential that the needs of the seniors, the disabled, and the physically challenged are adhered to. Of course, there must also be representation from environmental and native organizations to ensure that the needs of the north and the needs of our new environmentally-conscious society are adhered to. The board of course would ensure that there would be equitable regional, provincial and territorial representation among its members.

The insurance that this commission has is that it is not just accountable to the government doing what a majority government wants to do, but it is accountable to the people of Canada and to Parliament through the Canada Post Act of 1981. We have to ensure that the mandate is adhered to so that we do not see a continuation of the decline of service, particularly in rural areas.