

there is an important minority in that company who are employees. One per cent of the shares of Telesat are held by 877 employees. Of these 672 are located at the head office and the remainder in regional offices.

The purpose of this amendment is to protect the minority shareholders and indeed to protect the employees who have shares in this company. Five hundred of those 877 employees are some of the best mathematicians in the world.

**Mr. Baker:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Some of them are the best physicists in the world. These are people who are hardworking and who have proven to the world their ability to compete with anybody in the world. I am pretty proud that in my riding of Ottawa—Vanier Telesat Canada is something of which we can boast because indeed it was the first to put a commercial communications satellite up there. It was an example for all the world. It was a respected and I would dare say exceptional endeavour on the part of these people.

They also put the second one up. We all know they had some problems opening the antenna but they have corrected that and it is now operative. We are indeed very much behind this group of scientists who are presently making the telecommunications and communications network of the world something of great importance to Canada.

I will not have time to get to that amendment but I want to address the question of the location of Telesat. The bill that we have before us does not give protection to the employees in terms of giving them an ironclad guarantee that Telesat will remain in the national capital region. It only addresses the question as one of possibly negotiating or maybe making it a condition of sale to the eventual buyer. I want to quote from the government's own press release. I hear the minister making noises over there. The government's press release states:

Bidders for the government's Telesat shares will need to state their intentions concerning the maintenance of Telesat headquarters and operations in the National Capital Region.

Why will this government not provide an ironclad guarantee to the 672 employees at Telesat's head office here in Ottawa that their jobs will remain in Ottawa?

### *Government Orders*

Why will it not incorporate this simple requirement into the legislation? It did not do it.

Perhaps we should not be surprised because it does not care for Public Service employees very much over there. It slashed them when it could and cut their salaries whenever possible. It even provoked them to go out on strike not very long ago, one of the hardest strikes we have had. This government has no employee—employer relations of any kind. We are just asking it to be sensitive to two things: first, that the families of these employees will have some kind of stability and, second, that their investment as minority shareholders will be protected. One per cent of all the shares held by Telesat are owned by their own employees.

I do not want to take any more time but I just ask the government to be understanding of the difficulties that people have in their careers and to be understanding of the fact that we have to make it a requirement that at least the head office of Telesat remains in the national capital region. I am very proud of the fact that they are in my riding. It happens to be something which we care for. I say to the government that it should take seriously this amendment before us, Motion No. 1 standing in the name of the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River that says minority shareholders should be protected also.

• (1630)

**Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member for Ottawa—Vanier. Over the years the member for Ottawa—Vanier and some other members on this side of the House have taken great pride in the fact, as the hon. member said, that we have some 500 scientists, mostly mathematicians, who work at mission control in Gloucester close to Ottawa. They put up, as the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier said, the first commercial communications satellite in the world. It was not the United States. It was not France. It was not Germany. It was not Britain. It was Canada in 1970.

The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier and I have conversed on many occasions as Telesat Canada put up its second one, its third one, its fourth one. To make reference to the minority shareholders, as he did, is the least the Government of Canada can do.