

Government Orders

needed across the country. Again, with over 1,200 post offices closed and as we speak another 145 under review for closure, it is safe to say that there is not a single post office in Canada that is safe in the future, safe meaning being kept open for public use.

Finally, if the government and Canada Post really wish to create an atmosphere of good will with the postal workers, there is a very simple place to start and that is to bargain in good faith with CUPW, PSAC and CUPE members. July 1992 marked three years that postal workers were without a collective agreement. It is not for lack of trying on their part because we all know of the many efforts made by the unions involved in trying to come to a successful collective agreement. But alas, the hesitancy of the postal corporation simply made this virtually impossible.

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s the government has been pushing Canada Post to make service to Canadians a secondary consideration. If Canada Post could make service its number one goal, certainly there would be much less friction in the setting of goals and working with the postal workers themselves.

In conclusion, I appreciate having an opportunity to say a few words regarding Bill C-73 but I think the government's intent is misdirected. The government is misleading both the employees of Canada Post and Canadians generally if it feels this is going to make any difference in creating more harmonious relations between the workers and management within the post office.

As I said at the outset, there are good reasons why Parliament ought not to consider legislation of this type. When you consider all of the other challenges facing Canada, when you consider all of the other work that must be done in improving the employment opportunities for Canadians from coast to coast to coast, surely wasting time on this type of very misdirected and rather deceiving initiative is inappropriate and a waste of the time of the House of Commons. I think our time would be much better spent in finding ways and means of getting those 1.6 million Canadians who are jobless today back to work in a meaningful way.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-73.

Members of this House will know that my colleagues in the Liberal Party and I have fought this bill relentlessly. Yesterday approximately two dozen Liberal MPs spoke against it at report stage in an effort to convince the government across the way that the bill should be withdrawn. It should be withdrawn for two reasons.

First of all, the bill itself does not accomplish what the government pretends it is going to accomplish. I will get into that in a minute.

Second, what is wrong is that there are a number of post office issues that the House should be addressing, if that is what the government thinks is the most important thing on the agenda, but this is not one of the issues that is important to the Canadian public.

I will give an example of an issue that is important. For instance, there is a bill on the Order Paper of the House of Commons at the present time. It just happens to be under my name. I want to indicate that this bill would be to establish a postal services review committee, a watchdog over Canada Post, the same kind of watch-dog that presently exists in the United States and in other jurisdictions. It would supervise that particular agency, review rate increases on behalf of the Canadian public, ensure that there is no cross-subsidization of rates between monopoly rates and rates that compete with the private sector. Why are we not dealing with an issue like that? It was the government in the Marchment committee recommendations of 1985 that decided to go ahead with the postal services review committee. Then it was abandoned.

• (1125)

[*Translation*]

But why, Mr. Speaker? We still do not know, but some of us think that the government set up such a committee several years ago and that the committee's first report gave the government news that the minister did not want to hear.

If the messenger brings bad news, you know what happens to the messenger, he is eliminated. That is what the government did to this postal services review com-