

Government Orders

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): There is no unanimous consent.

Mr. Charles A. Langlois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, in that case, I believe there is unanimous consent for moving the following motion:

That the House continue to sit beyond the ordinary hour of adjournment today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Finance and Privatization): Mr. Speaker, I realize the clock is moving and time is limited but I would like to say a few words in this debate.

I have been listening to the debate with great interest. I am delighted to say some of the speakers have even spoken to the bill that is before the House, which I think is very encouraging to see for this place.

I just listened to my hon. friend from London East as he went on about postal services and described this bill as a scam.

I have to say that having read the legislation, I think it is a wonderful opportunity for the employees of Canada Post to have a stake in their company. I do not know why my hon. friend would think that is such a heinous, villainous thing. He talks about voting shares on the board. In fact the procedure by which this program was established is very similar to that which exists in most employee stock plans, so there is nothing unusual there.

I was equally amazed earlier in the debate to hear my hon. friend from Thunder Bay speaking against this legislation. I know from time to time it is hard to fathom exactly what the policies of the Liberal Party are but usually, whether we agree or not, we at least know what the policies of the NDP are. The member's good friends

in the Government of Ontario have recently brought in Bill 150 to make this kind of employee stock savings plan available to employees of corporations in Ontario. I also noticed that the Government of British Columbia is doing a similar thing, therefore I thought the New Democratic Party would have roundly endorsed this legislation. I must say I am a little bit bewildered trying to figure out exactly what it is doing.

Much of the discussion here is centred around issues of postal service and so on, but everybody who is a member of Parliament has to deal with the fact that some people are not happy with the quality of service they receive from Canada Post. I mailed a letter last Monday and was disappointed to find out that as of last night it had not arrived yet in Toronto. However, these things happen from time to time and surely to goodness we have to take a look at the over-all quality of service as well.

Rural and urban issues also come up from time to time. All rural members in this Chamber have had to deal with the issue of the closure of rural post offices. It is very difficult. It is not hard to discover as a rural member that there is a real urban focus in this government and not just in Canada Post. The people who develop the legislation and programs are urban based for the most part. That is reflected in many of the issues that come before this House and in the legislation that frequently reflects an urban rather than rural bias.

As members of this House, it is also our responsibility to assist our constituents from time to time in understanding the changes that are taking place. The fact of the matter is that the role, function and purpose of Canada Post is to deliver the mail. If that does not happen expeditiously and on a for value basis, we have a right to complain and criticize.

I think nothing has been more destructive to the quality of mail service in this country than the labour-management relations that exist within Canada Post and the perception on the part of many Canada Post employees that the company is the enemy. They do not feel they have a stake in the company. I think that has been a large part of the problem in Canada Post. That is being addressed in this piece of legislation. It is an effort to bring Canada Post employees closer to the company so they feel they have a stake in it and are a part of it.