

*Government Orders*

degrading the type of delivery service that Canadians should have.

Believe me, when you go to that post office in Ottawa weather like today and try to get your mail that post box is frozen. After a rainstorm, snowstorm or any difficult weather, you might be two or three days trying to get your mail out of that supermailbox. That says an awful lot about service to Canadians and concern for that person who is getting his or her letter delivered.

When you go to those supermailboxes and there is a snow-drift in front of it, you cannot get into it. This is another problem that is created readily. Already we see Canada Post thinking about paying dividends to Ottawa as a tax on postage. That can only negatively impact the services across this country. Vital postal subsidies in support of a fragile Canadian magazine and newspaper industry have been taken away.

• (1030)

We debated that issue that was gazetted in the last two years where small-town newspapers have had the big hand of this government and the big hand of Canada Post pull those subsidies away, where the profit lines were very close and the newspaper had to be very careful of its operation.

Subsidies to help them continue to get local information out to small communities have been removed. Subsidies to help ethnic newspapers continue to operate across this land have been removed. The result is that every Canadian from coast to coast pays more money for that newspaper or magazine to be delivered to them. Every Canadian pays it in a different way. Previously there was some protection given to these newspapers and magazines to keep the Canadian press going. That has been removed. It is really a passing down of the costs to other people.

A committee of MPs says labour relations in Canada Post have changed very little since 1985. I have heard the minister suggest that this legislation is going to improve the relationship with employees in Canada Post, but those employees have come back suggesting they want no part of this legislation. It seems odd to me that on the one hand the government says this will solve our em-

ployee employer relationships but in reality the work force says absolutely no way.

That is a viewpoint from *The Toronto Star*. Much of that information is what *The Toronto Star* has said about this legislation.

As well, I want to point out that in *The Ottawa Citizen* there have been articles about this Canada Post legislation. Mr. Andre was quoted as insisting that privatization was not in the cards. The article goes on to say:

"If I had to bet, I would bet that in the next couple of decades, you will see post offices being privatized all over the world and I would not mind seeing Canada first."

Yes, Mr. Andre would like to see Canada first. I have a sense that this is the beginning, no matter how much it is denied, of the privatization process.

There is another article in *The Ottawa Citizen* in which states:

While saying the federal government will not move to privatize Canada Post before the next election, Mr. Andre refused to rule out taking that step in later years if the Tories remain in power. Such a decision might make sense, he said, if mail service to unprofitable areas can be guaranteed.

The design is there. The plan is there. The comments are there. This is the beginning of the privatization process. Further to that, another article indicates that there may be many problems with this legislation. We are not hearing the full story.

If the government allows Canada Post employees to buy stock in that enterprise, how long will it take Ottawa to conclude that everybody should have shares in Canada Post? I contend here today that it is not going to take the Conservative government very long to decide that everybody should share in this corporation.

• (1035)

Mr. Andre insists that the employee stock scheme is not the first step toward privatization of what is fundamentally a public service, but the Prime Minister once assured Canadians that the Crown corporation Air Canada was not for sale. It was not that long ago that the Prime Minister insisted Air Canada was not for sale, but look at us today. Harvie Andre—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois)** According to tradition in this House, the rule is not to name hon. members by their names. I appreciate the co-operation of the hon. member.