

Mr. Speaker, do you understand why we on this side of the House are opposed to Bill C-37? I would go on, but my time is up.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member will have four minutes this afternoon to finish his speech.

It being 1.16 p.m., I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1.16 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

DOMINION COAL COMPANY OF CANADA

PLIGHT OF FORMER EMPLOYEES

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, shortly before Christmas I drew the attention of the House and the Government to the plight of the former employees of the Dominion Coal Company of Canada. The Government, through its Crown corporation the Cape Breton Development Corporation, has completely ignored the plea for assistance that I made on behalf of those individuals last December.

In this day and age, in a country as rich as Canada, people should not be made to live under such circumstances. The Cape Breton Development Corporation has no legal responsibility for these people; on that there is no dispute. However, there are many who argue that this Crown corporation has a very large moral responsibility to assist these individuals. These people have devoted their lives to the coal industry and the island of Cape Breton, and are owed something by this Crown corporation.

I call upon the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Côté) to come to the assistance of these people at once. Many of these people are living well below the poverty line. It is time for the Minister to initiate an investigation into this matter, report to Parliament forthwith, and provide substantial funds for these individuals.

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CROWN CORPORATIONS

SUCCESSFUL PRIVATIZATION

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, in November, 1984, the Government announced its agenda for economic renewal which included a policy of

S.O. 21

privatizing those Crown corporations that no longer serve a public policy purpose.

The goal of privatization is not primarily to correct the mistakes of the past but, rather, to ensure the best possible future for the companies and their employees. To date, six Crown corporations, including Canadian Arsenals, de Havilland, and Canadair have been sold. In every case the divestiture was successful.

Privatization reduces the size of government, stimulates private initiative, promotes competition and better use of resources, and improves the efficiency of the corporation by subjecting it to the practicalities of the market-place and by reducing the opportunities for political and bureaucratic interference.

I congratulate the Minister of State for Privatization (Mrs. McDougall) and urge her to proceed with privatization of the Petro-Canada empire as soon as possible.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

RETENTION OF SATURDAY SERVICE IN RURAL AREAS ADVOCATED

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, Saturday service at the post office is being cut off in rural areas. We have received documentation from Sudbury in this regard. This move continues the pattern of treating rural citizens as second-class citizens when it comes to postal service.

When the plan for the Post Office was announced it was done so after its development behind closed doors. As a consequence, when Conservative back-benchers saw how terrible the plan was for rural Canadians, they revolted. Even the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) was quoted as saying that no longer would rural citizens be treated as second-class citizens.

The committee has held its hearings, and they were a farce. The plans are still in place to cut back on service in rural Canada. Rural Canadians are still being treated as second-class citizens. They have been forced to organize. They have organized a group called Rural Dignity, which is holding meetings across the country and which is seeking a meeting with the Minister. The Minister has refused to meet with this group. He has refused to respond to its request for a meeting. The committee continues to refuse calls for public hearings with regard to postal service.

We on this side of the House call for the first-class treatment of rural residents. We call for a reinstatement of Saturday delivery in rural areas. We ask the Government to reverse its policy of cut-backs in rural service.