

corporation violated the collective bargaining rules, the rules of the contract, which were agreed to by both sides.

We know that just because somebody files a grievance does not necessarily mean that they are correct in suggesting that the company has violated a particular clause. However in that same contract is a process for dealing with those grievances. When there are 100,000 grievances outstanding there is a really big problem.

If we look at some of the patterns within Canada Post from coast to coast to coast in terms of the areas where there may be more militancy or higher absenteeism we really must look beyond the specific grievances and find out what the management attitude is, whether it is an attitude handed down from head office or the attitude of the supervisory staff at a particular location, to find out where the problems really are. That is what we have to do if we really want to be serious about addressing the whole question of labour-management peace.

• (1305)

We also have to ask ourselves whether Canada Post's drive to do much better on its bottom line, to show a profit, has not in part been designed to bring about a forced reduction in the level of service even more than we have already seen.

In suburban Canada people who moved across a line, across the street, went from having door-to-door service to group mailboxes. In the rural area there is now a preponderance of green mailboxes as opposed to drive-way-to-driveway delivery, which not too many years ago we could count on as rural residents.

Take a look at our urban post offices. If we go there between 4 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. what do we see? We see long lines, primarily business people, but also people who have just left work and want to do their postal business before the close of the post office that day. What has Canada Post done? It has minimized the number of staff who are there to serve the customers. One or two counter clerks are available at a time when there are 20, 30 or 40 people standing in line trying to do business.

That is done on purpose. That is part of Canada Post's way of forcing a downsizing of the existing corporation, of making it more palatable for post office services to be handled at Safeway, the corner store, or wherever

### *Government Orders*

because people are fed up with the line-ups and the long wait. If people are in business, whether they are the gofer whose job it is to take the mail out and process it at the post office or the owner of that business, they do not have time to waste standing in line at the post office. It has a major negative impact on commerce in this country.

Canada Post is now operating under a really neat logic. Instead of having the mail sorted in the community it is destined for—if I dropped a piece of mail in the mail box outside my office in Thunder Bay it would not be processed locally. It would be shipped off to Winnipeg to be sorted and brought back to Thunder Bay. Does that make sense? Is that a good use of human resources? Is it a good use of transportation resources? I think not. What it does is add to the length of time it takes a letter to go across the street.

There was a time when we used to have mail sorting cars on our passenger rail trains. A letter mailed in Thunder Bay on Monday afternoon that was addressed to Ottawa was delivered there the next morning by train. We have gone backward in a lot of things we have done at Canada Post.

In addition to giving the employees this golden opportunity to divert their hard-earned money back into the company they have been fighting with for decades, this bill does not do anything for service. It does not improve service at the post office, does not improve rural service, does not restore Saturday service or Saturday delivery, and does not restore sorting in the communities in which the mail is collected. It does nothing to improve Canada Post services.

The government always talks about wasting House time. It rails at us because we want to debate items and we want to debate them for more than four or five hours. The government could have saved a lot of time for a lot of people, and a lot of aggravation, by not having brought this bill forward.

• (1310)

Which employees are going to buy these shares? Is it going to be the single mom who is a counter clerk and is earning just enough to get by on? I admit that Canada Post because of the collective agreement pays a decent income to its workers. But in today's society even a decent income as we used to define it is not enough. Is