

*Supply—Post Office*

sideration is being given to the reinstatement of two a day delivery for residential walks in urban centres. This is a matter of concern to all people in business or in the professions in our growing municipalities. I do not think I can do better than describe a situation which exists in Hamilton in what is currently regarded by the Post Office Department as a residential walk.

Within that walk there is a club which possibly could do with one delivery a day. Next door to that club is the Bell Telephone Company. Next door to the Bell Telephone Company is a well-known restaurant above which are a number of professional offices. Next door again is a hotel which also contains many shops and professional offices. Around the corner and down the side street is the head office of one of the largest canneries in the Dominion of Canada. Down the back street is the Y.M.C.A. and a stockbroker's office, as well as several other business offices. I think I have given enough information to indicate the character of this so-called residential walk.

Within the past six months it was necessary for me to move my office from a location which was serviced with three a day delivery. I moved only three and a half blocks and have one a day delivery at 8.30 in the morning. This means that mail from Toronto, Montreal, Chicago or New York does not reach me until twenty-four hours later. I know a similar situation exists in the business and professional offices located in the block in which my office is located, and which is only three and a half blocks from the centre of the city of Hamilton.

During the past few years, with the shortage of building materials and so on, many people have moved out of their uptown offices into what was formerly residential accommodation which had been converted into office space because of its central location. I suppose the answer to this complaint will be that these persons could go to the central post office, which in this case is only six blocks away, rent a post office box and collect their mail. We would be glad to do that, but unfortunately the central post office has no boxes for sale. All of that type of accommodation is taken up. One is faced with the situation that unless his clients and customers and other correspondents use special delivery in each case, his mail will be delayed by twenty-four hours.

I have had numerous letters from people in Hamilton which I do not propose to read into the record at this stage, but they prove that mail for delivery within the city of

[Mrs. Fairclough.]

Hamilton has taken as much as three days when the distance involved was only half a mile.

I am sure the Postmaster General will be the first to say that a situation like this cannot be condoned in a department which pretty well pays its own way. Within a short time we have had an increase in rates. We all realize that costs have increased, and I am sure the businessmen of this country consider that postage is the least of their expenses. I am sure also that they would be willing to pay more for post office service if they could obtain it. But when one is stymied at every point, when one cannot receive mail which he knows is in transit either by applying at the central post office or by having it delivered at his premises, it is indeed a cause for some concern. So I ask the Postmaster General to tell us what is contemplated, and I hope he will say it is not going to be very long until at least two a day delivery is reinstated on residential walks within municipalities.

With this in mind I think I should read into the record a rather amusing commentary which appeared in a local newspaper. It is headed, "Those were the days", and reads as follows:

Maddened businessmen impatiently awaiting letters which travel from city to city across Canada with all the speed of a pony express are wondering just how much progress there has been in the past sixty years. In April, 1892, the postmaster for Hamilton was pleased to announce an extra afternoon delivery of mail in the downtown area. This made not two, not three, but four deliveries of mail daily. Local mail received at the general post office by 2 p.m. was promised delivery the same day. Today it can easily take a letter two or three days to travel three blocks in the city. To secure any reasonable guarantee of early delivery a letter must have a 10-cent special delivery stamp attached. For householders there is only one delivery a day, sometimes late in the afternoon. Looking back at 1892, it looks as though at least in one department the clock has been turned back a very long way.

I realize that all departments of the government have great problems in these days of rising costs and demands for economy, but in a department which has consistently had considerable revenue flowing into it, as well as expenses out of it, it seems to me there is very little reason for curtailing a service which after all keeps the business, industrial, commercial and professional life in this country flowing. I hope the minister has taken all this into consideration and will give us a favourable answer. I hope he will reinstate if not three at least two deliveries a day on the residential walks many of which now service commercial and professional enterprises within municipalities.

There is one other matter of which I wish to speak, and it is one that has been brought