

Post Office Act

meeting on Monday to consider this bill and to discuss their official representation to the minister.

Even though the newspaper publishers association did not hold a brief for us in the last election, I understand this association has been hamstrung because of its constitution and has been unable to meet as a body until Monday, even though individual members have met with the minister. In view of this and in view of what the hon. member for Hillsborough said earlier concerning the staggering impact of clause 4, perhaps the minister would consider standing this clause. It may be that after their meeting the members of the newspaper publishers association may come back and sing hosannahs to the minister for having preserved the Saturday delivery and for having staggered the impact of the drastic increases. There is not a member of this house on this side who really knows what their reaction will be. This is strictly gratuitous advice, but I believe that if we do not get this bill through before five o'clock we should stand clause 4 and then we could go through the other clauses quickly. This would give the association all the necessary time to look at the impact of these rates and make their official presentation to the minister. That, in general, is all I wish to say about clause 4. I have something more particular which I should like to say with regard to the *Halifax Herald*.

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Chairman, I met with the president and general manager of the Canadian newspaper publishers association one evening and spent a few hours with them. As the hon. member suggests, they explained that they were acting unofficially for their association because of a restrictive clause in their regulations. They wanted me to meet on Monday with as many directors as were interested. The following Monday for another hour and a half I met with 13 of the directors from coast to coast, from Halifax to Vancouver. They reiterated that they were not making a formal presentation but said "Here it is." I think they have presented their views. I do not expect them to sing hosannahs to me on Monday. I should like to ask for the adoption of this clause.

Mr. Nowlan: May I thank the minister for that extension of the information I have. I appreciate that perhaps his views would not change, even if he met with these people officially. If he is satisfied that he has their full views, I will not press the matter any

further. Neither shall I rehash the arguments in respect of the constructive suggestion that this bill be referred to a committee. Because of the fact that these rates will not take effect until April 1, I will not repeat the arguments which already have been made.

I should like to refer now to the subject which really moved me to rise in the first place. I wish to be parochial and refer to a provincial area, the area of Nova Scotia. Since we are on this clause I believe this is the proper time to be parochial. I wonder whether any consideration has been given by the minister and his officials to another rate being struck for newspapers that in effect deliver their own publications. It is only sorted, carried and distributed by the postmaster and the postman in the post office of distribution. I do not know whether this situation applies in many other parts of Canada, other than the maritimes, and particularly Nova Scotia.

There are 33,000 mail subscribers to the *Halifax Herald*. If we believe the classified ads the total figure is over 40,000. During the recent campaign there was a good deal of talk about economic disparity. As the hon. member for Hillsborough mentioned these rate increases will perhaps be partly absorbed by the newspapers but will at least be partly passed on to the subscribers. If these rates should be passed along completely to the subscribers, then the economic disparity in an area already cut off may be worse. This applies certainly to the Atlantic area and to the *Halifax Herald* which delivers its paper from Halifax to Sydney, and then the Sydney post office perhaps distributes them to the rural mail contractors.

• (4:40 p.m.)

I should like to know what justification there is for charging the same rate to newspaper publishers that deliver their own mail to the point of distribution, and those newspaper publishers which drop the newspapers off at the Ottawa post office, for example, for distribution in Montreal. Perhaps this is true of the Toronto *Globe and Mail* which comes from Toronto to Ottawa. I am wondering if this situation has been considered and whether the establishment of a special rate would help to alleviate the burden on newspapers in Nova Scotia which depend on mail subscriptions, but which, because of the small size of the province, have set up their own trucking services to deliver the mail from Halifax to various points of distribution where the local postman delivers it to the door.