

Remember Sixpence Buys Six Big Oranges

[AT THE OTTAWA POST OFFICE]

The Prime Minister said candidly last April, "Everyone knows the mails are slow in this country."

Actually they aren't that slow:

—"Slow" is a relative term, and by some less than totally demanding standards, Canadian mail moves reasonably fast. A test letter recently moved from Pouch Cove in Newfoundland, 3244.9 miles to Vancouver, British Columbia, in thirty-four hours and ten minutes, a rate of ninety-five miles an hour.

—"Assured" mail movement to and from places larger than Pouch Cove is now promised and to a very great degree delivered. A letter mailed before 11 A.M. in Montreal should — and almost always does — arrive in Toronto the next day.

— A massive mechanization program, based on a six-unit postal code, is well underway. It is now in operation in Ottawa and by late 1977 it will be in use in twenty-five other major Post Offices — installation of the new equipment will begin in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina and Edmonton before the end of the year and in Calgary by next February. Toronto will get its in April, and Vancouver, Victoria, Hamilton, London,

Windsor, Halifax, Quebec City and Montreal will follow. By the end of 1977, Letter Sorting Machines will be in operation in Post Offices in the Ontario cities, St. Catharines, Kitchener, Oakville, Oshawa, Kingston, Brantford, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay; in St. John, N.B.; and Sherbrooke, P.Q., as well. This mechanization program will cost over \$100 million. When it is completed, 92 per cent of all mail in Canada will be machine-handled, and most if not all of the thirty-one separate handlings now required for a single piece of cross-country mail will have been eliminated. Jerry Fultz, the man in charge, is sure all will be rolling by '77. "We are exactly on time and exactly on budget," he said.

The reformation in Canada's mail system began around 1969 shortly after Eric Kierans became Postmaster General. Before that Canada was divided into postal zones within each province and city and these were being further divided. Kierans stopped the sub-dividing in the belief that it might be better to start from a new beginning. A Montreal consulting firm had recommended that a national postal coding system be adopted, an appropriate if not particularly

The letter in the gentleman's right hand went from Pouch Cove, Nfld., to Vancouver, B.C., in less than two days. Its arrival on the west coast is graphically depicted on page 4.

