

These public boxes are a problem in our villages, especially in winter, when the snow-plow knocks them all down on its way, as it happened in some villages not far from Saint-Félicien.

• (5:30 p.m.)

One could knock down this collection of public boxes one fine day in those parts of the country where winter lasts six months a year. This is why I want to draw this problem to the attention of the minister, and especially of his officials.

The latter should once again make a study about this post office, and convince themselves that there are now 40 users. According to the regulations, according to the correspondence, the minister said that he was closing the post offices with 30 users or less. As in this village there are 40 users and others will arrive next summer, I wonder if the minister has good reason now to close this post office.

Besides, he tells us, I think, that this other service, that is the rural mail delivery service, costs about \$3,332.

I simply wish to point to the minister that if he came to make a survey—I do not know whether it is route No. 1 or No. 3—he would find out that there is one with about only three or four users left, while the route is still carried out in the whole division.

In my opinion, those people would be ready, with the village inhabitants, to give up the money allocated for that route, serving three or four users, so that it could be spent in the village. This would balance expenditures without involving any surplus, although an inquiry should be made to find out if those three or four users would really be ready to yield their rights in favour of the village inhabitants. To say the truth, it seems they would rather get their mail at the village post office. In my opinion, we could deal with the financial problem that way, to the satisfaction of the people there, while providing them at the same time with good service.

Last Saturday, namely on May 10, I went to Saint-Stanislas to discuss with the association's president the postal problem, because a council was created to deal with this question. I met the association's president and he discussed the matter with me. I told him that at the earliest opportunity in the house, I would draw the minister's attention to that. In my opinion, this is a very interesting proposal, as at present that post office is not really up to the standards set by hon. minister, who says

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that where there are less than 30 families, the post office will be closed.

The minister has received the request, signed by 40 persons, and dated February 17, from the secretary-treasurer's office of the Saint-Stanislas municipality, which said, and I quote:

Mr. Minister,

We, the undersigned, residents of Saint-Stanislas, in the county of Roberval, who are not being served through rural mail delivery, firmly object to the closing of our post office.

Mr. Minister, we request, through our federal member, that the St-Stanislas post office, in the Roberval riding, be kept open and we ask you to take into consideration the fact that:

The rural mail service cannot replace the use of a post office which provides many services even to the people already served through rural mail delivery in a climate as harsh as ours.

The closing of our post office would greatly affect all our public bodies such as: the credit union, the city council, the school board, the manufacturing plant, the farmers wives' club, the convent and others—the services of the post office are indispensable and preferable to all the inconveniences of the rural mail delivery as far as all our organizations are concerned.

That request was signed by 40 users. The minister is well aware of that.

Without going into further detail on the subject, I should like the minister to reconsider the case before putting this post office under lock and key because, in my opinion, these people need their post office. They live far from other centers and it would simply be an injustice to take away their post office.

The officials should make a thorough study of the rural mail routes. It is also claimed that the post office is not a paying proposition.

It must also be noted that the St-Stanislas post office and Rural Route No. 3 of that parish are in the Mistassini postal district and that Mistassini Rural Route No. 3 is in the St-Stanislas postal district.

I believe this is a mistake. The revenue of profit-making routes in considered as part of the revenue of the Mistassini post office, when that is not the case at all. Those routes belong to St-Stanislas, and the amounts should appear in the revenue of St-Stanislas.

I do not imagine that the officials are prejudiced, and I would not like to criticize their inspector—who likely is also a postmaster—or anybody else, but I simply ask that justice be done. There should be a serious inquiry. I am sure that the minister will realize that that village needs its post office, and that it can