

Postal Service

from the coast of Maine to a port in a neighbouring province. We in New Brunswick were happy to learn of this assistance, because we are always glad when the federal government decides to give any help whatever to any of the maritime provinces; but we feel that our province will suffer so far as the tourist industry is concerned, in that many tourists who normally would come through New Brunswick may be diverted directly to Nova Scotia as a result of the operation of this ferry. So we feel that if the trans-Canada highway were to follow route No. 2 from Edmundston to Fredericton, thence to Saint John via routes 2 and 2A, and from there to the town of Sussex, it would at least partly make up for what may be a considerable reduction in the flow of tourists who normally would come through our province.

On behalf of my own constituency, and on behalf of those living in the particular section of New Brunswick whence I come, I would again urge that the federal government do everything possible to ensure that the trans-Canada highway be brought down the Saint John river, or by the shortest practical route to the city of Saint John and from there on to Sussex and Moncton.

POST OFFICE—DENIAL OF THE USE OF MAILS

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on May 9 the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) and the Acting Postmaster General (Mr. Lapointe) made statements in regard to the exercise by the Postmaster General of the powers conferred upon him under regulations 204 and 205. This subject had been under discussion before, and I would remind the house of the unusual way in which it was dealt with at that time. Questions had been asked on different occasions as to the procedure being followed in denying the use of the mails in certain cases. It had been said that a clear statement would be given to the house as to what the situation was. We were told that the subject would be discussed. When the first item of the Post Office Department was called on May 9, the Minister of Justice took advantage of the occasion to make a statement, and he was followed by the Acting Postmaster General. Then the discussion was stopped by the device of presenting a motion that the committee rise and report progress; the use of that unusual device should not be overlooked. The house had been assured there would be a discussion of this subject. Two ministers of the crown presented statements which called for discussion, but the discussion was stopped by a device that can be employed at any time by a government that makes use of its majority,

[Mr. Riley.]

without regard to its undertakings and without regard to the right of the house to have a discussion on a subject of this kind.

I am mentioning this matter again, because one of the departments to be called when the Speaker leaves the chair is that of the Minister of Justice. It therefore seems appropriate that I should make certain remarks about this subject on the first occasion which presents itself. The matter we are considering is not whether the authority of the Postmaster General is to be exercised in relation to certain brokers in this country; it is how the authority and powers of the Postmaster General under the postal regulations are to be exercised in any case. Often it is only when certain publicity attaches to a particular act of some department that we learn what the situation is. I certainly was unaware of the number of orders that have been issued denying the use of the mails, and the orders which have been issued against brokers are only a small percentage of the outstanding orders of this nature. There are at the present time approximately 1,100 outstanding orders denying the use of the mails. They are issued against many organizations, and many individuals in different activities. The very nature of some of the organizations suggests that it would be wise for the members of the house to give careful consideration to the way in which this power is being exercised. Amongst the organizations which have been denied the use of the mails are branches of the Legion in different parts of Canada; service clubs; religious orders; athletic organizations; social organizations of various kinds. I find in one case there is a teachers organization, and similar action has been taken with respect to a large number of individuals from one end of the country to the other.

What we should consider, therefore, is the exercise of this authority in relation to many types of organizations throughout Canada, and whether it is in keeping with our traditional practices, and our belief that every man and every woman is presumed to be innocent until he or she is proven guilty.

The explanation given by the Minister of Justice and the Postmaster General as to what had taken place was not satisfactory. The explanation of the Minister of Justice was devoted to the limitation of the use of the mails to certain brokers. At page 2333 of *Hansard* he is reported at the outset of his remarks as saying:

Mr. Chairman, the matter of the protection of the mails from being used for schemes devised or intended to deceive the public is one of considerable importance. From one standpoint it affects certain rights of individual brokers, and of course no government wishes to deal unfairly with them. From another standpoint it affects the efficient workings