

*Supply—Post Office*

doorstep; it is a matter of him making the effort to travel anywhere up to 10 or 15 miles to get his mail under varying conditions, depending on the weather. The advantage that man could get would be to have good postal facilities in those towns and rural communities, and adequate provision to see that the mail is delivered to those post offices as early as possible and not on a weekly or a bi-weekly basis.

It is apparent to me that if hon. members from cities are requesting twice a day mail delivery in towns, certainly farmers in rural communities should expect their mail to be delivered to the post office once a day so they could make an effort to go there and get it. Instead of the rather shabby post offices which we have, I think more consideration should be given to an increased expenditure to build up those facilities to allow people in rural communities to get something for the increased postal rates.

I think the minister has given consideration to this matter, and I notice that a deliberate effort has been made to increase postal services in the larger towns and communities. I notice that the growing community of Unity received a post office which was opened only recently, and which allows farmers in the district of Unity to be in pleasant surroundings after they have made a trip of five or six miles to the town to collect their mail.

I would point out at the same time that there are many other communities in my constituency, and indeed in all rural Canada, which are as deserving. We have the community of Leader south of the river, which is quite a distance from the larger points. It is quite obvious that anyone sending mail there will not get immediate advantage from the air service. My request to the minister, then, is to give increased consideration to providing postal facilities to the farmers in those areas.

The town of Leader has a considerable postage stamp and money order business, since it is located a relative distance from the larger towns. In my opinion it would be deserving of increased postal facilities in the form of a federal building. If the minister is going to give consideration to those rural areas the natural outcome would be a recommendation for a new federal building in the town of Leader.

In the same connection I would suggest that increased consideration be given to placing vans on certain routes to deliver mail to rural communities, so the mail could be picked up there. I have in mind the village of Eatonias which, upon the removal of the train service, was getting its mail delivered by bus. It was found that there was some

[Mr. Johnson (Kindersley).]

difficulty in connection with a bus arriving at that village on a daily basis, and my suggestion there is that a small van of some type be rented or hired to deliver the mail from the larger town of Kindersley to the towns of Eatonias, Laporte, Glidden and Mantario on a daily basis.

They would then be receiving some advantage from the increase in the postal rate from 4 cents to 5 cents. These are the two matters to which I would like the minister to give consideration, and I think they apply to many of the rural areas which are located some distance from larger cities. In summing up, they do not benefit from the speedier air service because the greater portion of their mail is within the province and on rail lines, so let us enable them to benefit from the increase in the postal rate by providing better service and better facilities for those in the rural communities.

I would appreciate it if the minister could give me any information concerning the town of Leader, which I mentioned as an example, and also concerning the possibility of putting on buses to deliver mail to rural communities so it may be more readily picked up by farmers in those communities.

**Mr. Zaplitny:** Mr. Chairman, I have only two matters I wish to raise at this time, and both are matters of policy. I think this is the appropriate time to raise them.

The first is the matter of parcels that are sent by Canadians to their relatives and friends in what are known as iron curtain countries, and particularly Soviet Russia. That question was raised in the debate on the speech from the throne by the hon. member for Vegreville, when he set out a few examples of what transpires when someone wishes to send a parcel of clothes, food or whatever the case may be to someone within the Soviet union.

The hon. member cited figures and said—if I remember them correctly—that a parcel valued at approximately \$12 would cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$36 or \$38 by the time it arrived at its destination because of the many extra charges that are added.

In recent months I have received a great many inquiries about this matter, as I am sure many other hon. members have, and I am wondering whether the department has in mind any change of policy or could indicate any new channel through which this type of mail could be handled. If so it would be highly desirable for the minister to announce it at the earliest possible moment, so that people who desire to make use of the post office as a medium through which to send parcels to friends and relatives in iron curtain countries could do so at the least possible expense.