

Therefore, I would like to be told, as accurately as possible, what it costs to produce those stamps and how much the government gets out of it, which would allow hon. members to study the situation seriously and to make suggestions to the minister on how to finance that department and improve the service to the public.

I shall conclude with those remarks, since I consider them essential to the guidance of hon. members. I am convinced that the minister will in due course do his best to provide us with the information I am now requesting.

[English]

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, there has been a good deal of discussion on this bill and several of my colleagues have covered the points which seem to me to be of great importance. There is only one major point with which I would like to deal tonight. I know it has been touched on by some hon. members already, but I would like to emphasize it.

When speaking yesterday the minister indicated that the rates for second-class mail would not be changed at present because an in-depth study was being carried out. But then he went on to deal with third-class mail, indicating that the loss on that category of mail this year was expected to be about \$38 million. Then he said that this category covers printed materials of various sorts, such as advertising circulars and catalogues, Christmas cards and small packages of merchandise which do not weigh over one pound.

The point is that the minister did not include what to me is a very important kind of mail which is classed as third-class mail, that is, mail put out by voluntary, charitable health and welfare organizations and other such groups which give out information to their members on a non-profit, voluntary basis. I think that the minister should not lump third-class mail, profit-oriented, junk mail with the voluntary mailings of health and welfare and other charitable organizations which come under this category.

The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) made reference to the fact that the last time raises were made in postal rates back in November, 1968, the process killed hundreds of little magazines giving out educational, church and charitable information because publishers of these papers could not cope with the increased cost in the mail rates. This is a shameful thing indeed, as my colleague remarks. He has added a few other such groups, being of a helpful turn of mind, such as ethnic, religious and other groups who have suffered from this increase in postal rates, so that by extension the whole Canadian population has suffered from them.

Now, apparently the minister is proposing that third-class postal rates for this type of publication be increased again. He is evidently preparing for the slaughter of more organizations which would come under this category. I think that this should not be done. Not to leave these organizations faceless, I want to remind the minister of the group that came to see him on May 13 with a memorandum. These groups are well known to us all across Canada. There were three of them: the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled whose best

known activity is the Easter seal campaign, the Canadian Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases Association which every year conducts the Christmas seal campaign across this country, and the War Amputees of Canada with their key-tag service.

All these groups are non-profit and all of them are in a precarious financial situation. All of them are doing a necessary and valuable service to people, and all of them will be menaced by something which should apply only to junk mail under this new rate increase. If the minister is proposing to defer increases in second-class mail rates until he has made an in-depth study, why in the world is he not proposing to do an in-depth study of third-class mail which would divide junk mail from mail sent out by voluntary health, welfare and other non-profit groups?

• (9:30 p.m.)

Why does the minister not do what these organizations asked him to do, namely, establish a special category of mail for organizations such as those which run the Christmas seal and Easter seal campaigns and the key tagging service? Why should they be lumped in with junk mail? The minister promised these organizations that he would consider their request and that he would make an announcement before the new mailing rates come into effect on July 1. So far I have not noted any announcement by him on this subject and I am worried lest it be overlooked.

The representatives of these organizations pointed out that the last 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent increase in mailing rates made it very difficult for them to carry on operations, and that if they were again taxed by an increased postal rate the funds they would have available for welfare and public health purposes would be cut drastically, or they would have to reduce the number of mailings which would also have the effect of reducing the funds they could collect for their operations. To make these organizations pay increased mailing rates would be exceedingly short-sighted. It is estimated that in 1970 the postal revenue generated by these three groups, the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, the Canadian Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases Association and War Amputees of Canada, amounted to \$1,004,000. They point out that if another increase is imposed on them it will very likely reach the point of no return and instead of generating more revenue the Post Office will lose revenue from them. That is just like killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

If these organizations continue to be treated like the commercial purveyors of junk mail and as a result are unable to continue their work, government departments will have to undertake that work and another burden will be thrown on the taxpayer. These organizations object, I think rightly so, to being classed with the profit-oriented, commercial concerns which operate on the basis of junk mail. Junk mail concerns can increase the price of their goods and services but organizations such as those I have mentioned provide their services on a voluntary basis.

These organizations made two requests to the minister. The first was that he consider—in effect, that means