

*Post Office Act*

class mail tariffs in various countries, of which the United States. It would seem that, by accident, this document does not give comparative figures on second class rates in the United States and in Canada. Yet, the Post Office Department was supplied with those figures. They proved beyond a doubt that the proposed increase in Canada was simply extravagant compared with the one adopted in the United States.

The American government decreed an increase of approximately 15 per cent over a three-year period; this increase was supposedly reasonable. Canada stupidly accepts a total increase of 200 per cent over a year, when barely a year ago the rates were roughly the same in both countries.

Is this how the Postmaster General and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) intend to encourage dynamic Canadian publishing? Which of the American or Canadian publishers have the most difficulty in firmly setting themselves up under the American sun?

The Liberal government also intends to adjust the rates applied to two American publishers. The member who spoke before me mentioned this. I mean, the *Reader's Digest* and *Time*. But we can see to what extent he follows his traditionally prudent and servile reflexes when he attacks really powerful institutions.

• (4:50 p.m.)

In the case of dailies, they will have to pay in postal charges nearly three times more than what they are paying now, that is \$6,250,000 as compared with their present expenditures of \$2,250,000. As far as the *Reader's Digest* and *Time* are concerned, the government draws in its claws. These two publications pay at this time \$422,000, they would be paying \$747,000, that is only 80 per cent more. I hate making comparisons, I find them odious in many respects, but we disapprove of a government that compels us to do so, because it is unfair.

The Postmaster General has feigned to be a prince in continuing the rural mail delivery service on Saturday. We rejoice with the residents of rural areas for this major concession. This concession, however, does not solve the problem that would create for thousands of subscribers to a newspaper, the general suspension of the mail delivery on Saturdays, in urban centres.

Would the Postmaster General accept, for example, that in centres such as Chicoutimi, [Mr. Dumont.]

Rivière-du-Loup, Sherbrooke, Rimouski, Saint-Hyacinthe, Nicolet, Drummondville, Trois-Rivières, Thetford-Mines or Plessisville, at least the post offices would be opened on Saturday mornings, so that citizens could go and get their mail? Will he find another way to deliver the mail to them on that day? Would he be ready to provide for newspapers deprived of a delivery service to which they are undeniably entitled, financial compensations to permit them to plan otherwise?

The Postmaster General admitted the other day that every citizen is entitled to an equal service from his department. He must recognize, in consequence, that this principle is equally valid in the case of citizens and concerns using postal services for the delivery of their goods or products. The compromise announced by the Postmaster General solves only a small part of the problem deriving from the proposal to eliminate the Saturday mail. Will the victims have to yield once more to the purpose set by the Postmaster General without any means of redress, any compensation?

In his desire to nationalize the operations of the postal service, the minister is trying to reach a necessary objective. In his desire to bring rates to a more realistic level, he is equally partially right. But on the basis of such legitimate objectives, he goes astray in acting with a precipitation that can but betray the superficial character of his investigations on this question. The postal rate problem is a capital and complex matter. It must be thoroughly considered by parliament and the public.

Should the Postmaster General succeed in having this bill passed at full speed without accepting to make a more thorough investigation, as required by the opposition, he may be sure he will have dealt a treacherous blow to many institutions who deserved better than that. He will not be forgiven for having shown himself as a lamb with the outsiders and as a tyrant with his own people. The same reprobation will encompass the sheep that will follow him without further scrutiny, and those sheep, Mr. Speaker, are those Liberal members who do not even care to rise in the house and say something. Yet, when these Liberals were elected, the daily newspapers were their best propagandists. Today, only the members on this side of the house, namely we from the Ralliement, who are the official opposition from the province of Quebec, are giving the example of good work, and yet the newspapers barely say a word about our just contributions. Nevertheless,