

Supply—Post Office

you cannot have it; we have to call for tenders." Tenders were called for and, in order to be sure he would get it, this man put in a tender for \$1,525, and felt sure he would get it. He received no notice that his tender had not been accepted. However, a short time later he received notification to this effect: "No; we are going to get someone else to tender." They called for tenders over again; and in doing this I believe they were acting outside the law, because they went to another district and brought in a man from there. I have always thought that was against post office regulations. How this man who got the tender knew what the other man had tendered, I do not know. However the second man tendered at \$1,200 and, naturally, he got the contract.

If the Post Office Department here in Ottawa would look into these cases and not try to save \$10 or \$15 a month on these poor mail couriers I believe it would be much better. They should ask themselves this question, "Has this man who is tendering given us good service?" If that were done I think we would get down to a basis under which these men would be properly paid, and when they meet one another one would not say to the other, "I am driving the same distance you are, but you are receiving \$500 a year more than I." Yet in the face of this discouragement these men are as honest as the sun. Throughout the length and breadth of this country we hear of very few cases of mail couriers getting into serious trouble.

I have spoken on behalf of the mail couriers because I feel sure the new Postmaster General will give us an opportunity to take up this matter. I have confidence that hon. members will put a plan before the department that will be workable and fair, and do away with this discrimination.

I have one further point to discuss, and then I believe I shall have finished. Some time ago I discussed with the department the superannuation of personnel of the naval or air forces serving in the Korean theatre of war. The question has been asked whether their military service would count on their superannuation, and in this connection I have received several letters from the department. The deputy postmaster general wrote me on March 24, and still the question is not settled. I believe that with the assistance of his deputy minister the Postmaster General will soon have the matter disposed of. I understand treasury board is blocking the efforts being made. Those who enlisted in the Korean force should receive a square deal in respect of their superannuation, and a decision as to who should pay it.

[Mr. McLure.]

Then I have one further point to raise, about which I have spoken before and received a partial promise. I refer to the stamp vendor in the post office at Charlottetown. This person has been there for 52 years, under agreement with the Post Office Department that a 2 per cent commission would be paid on all sales in the post office and on all stamps sold in the Charlottetown area. He was able to make a fair living on that 2 per cent, but then the department put in these meter machines which take away 50 per cent of his revenue. They are wonderful machines for business; I have no objection to them, but this man should be compensated when they are used.

Mr. Gibson: Is there any other deal like that for vending postage stamps?

Mr. McLure: I could not tell my hon. friend.

Mr. Gibson: Perhaps the Postmaster General will tell us later.

Mr. McLure: This man has had this contract with the department for 52 years, during which he has given wonderful service. He must work from eight o'clock in the morning until eight at night, though I understood recently they were going to cut off twenty-five or thirty minutes from the day, no rest period, no meal hour, as he had to employ somebody to sell while he was out.

If you figure this up on the basis of the eight-hour day worked by others you find that this man has given 76 years of service. He is now around 80 years of age and the department tells him that he must get out. But they cannot turn him out because he has given good service. Before I left home I said to him, "Don't let them push you out, whatever you do; if you can just make ends meet, go ahead and stay there".

If the law enters into this matter this man should be able to sue the department. He should be able to get a fiat, as the hon. member for Lake Centre would say. There is not a judge in the land who would not say he should be paid for the business the meter machines have taken away. I am sure the Postmaster General would agree with that. When he looks into the matter I hope he will say to himself, "If I were in that position I would not stand for it; I would try to get back at the government so I would get a rate under my contract which would give the return it gave before I had these machines as competition". He applied to the department and asked that he be given 3 per cent on his sales, which would just about equal what he was losing because of the meter machines.