

*Government Organization*

matter his urgent attention, since I know that many hon. members of the house have made similar complaints.

**Mr. Hees:** Eric, aren't you glad you have so many little helpers?

**Mr. Haidasz:** I hope the minister will help us. The third point I wish to raise, Mr. Chairman, is that in my constituency of Parkdale the population has increased greatly in the last couple of years. Instead of being given more sub-post offices we have been deprived of three or four existing ones. I have received many complaints from my constituents, especially from those in the southern portion of my riding. They want additional sub-post offices.

Another point I wish to raise was that brought to the attention of the house by the hon. member for Winnipeg North and has to do with the submission the Canada Ethnic Press Federation made to the minister in January of this year. I point out to the minister that a delegation from the Canada Ethnic Press Federation arrived in Ottawa this afternoon and is seeking an appointment with him. As the hon. member for Winnipeg North said, the federation is worried about the economic implications of increased postage rates on second class mail.

In the brief it is said that after April 1 the Czechoslovak weekly, *Nove Domov*, or New Homeland will face rate increases of up to 2,000 per cent. The brief shows how much other ethnic weeklies will incur increased costs. In Canada 75 publications are put out in languages other than in English and French, something pointed out by the Canada Ethnic Press Federation. The brief deals with the service the ethnic press has rendered to Canada in the past 60 years. I feel, Mr. Chairman, that the federal government should reconsider its postal rate increase policy and take into account the effect that this will have on certain publications of the Canada Ethnic Press Federation. I hope the minister if not tonight, then tomorrow when he meets the Ethnic Press editors, will be able to inform them what hope there is that they may continue to publish their very worth while publications.

• (8:30 p.m.)

**Mr. Harding:** I would like to say a few words, Mr. Chairman, about the particular clause of Bill C-173 headed "Communications". I have drawn a number of problems to the attention of the Postmaster General. Of

[Mr. Haidasz.]

all the ministers in the cabinet, I receive better and faster replies from the Postmaster General than from any other minister. I think this is something—

**An hon. Member:** That's because they are delivered by hand.

**Mr. Harding:** They might be delivered by hand, but this is something we in the opposition appreciate.

There are several questions I would like to raise in connection with the reorganization which took place in the Post Office Department a couple of months ago. There was a sharp increase in postal rates, Mr. Chairman, and along with it a drastic reduction in the service which the Canadian people receive. There is no use telling Canadians generally that the over-all service has been improved, because it has not. I can frankly tell the minister and the members of this house that it takes a longer period of time for letters to reach their destination. In the case of second and third class mail, newspapers and other printed matter, the period of time which it takes for delivery of them is nothing short of scandalous.

I think the Canadian people would gladly go along with an increase in some categories. Certainly, some increases were warranted and I would be the last to say that they were not. However, when you have a sharp increase in mailing costs and a sharp reduction in service, then people have every right to complain. If this is the type of reorganization that this Liberal government believes will give a better deal to the Canadian people, then the sooner we scrap this government the better it is going to be.

I want to say a few words about the effect this reorganization is having on small post offices. The majority of members in this house come from the larger centres. They have not the foggiest notion of the trouble which people in small communities have in every field of communications, whether it is mail, radio or television. The larger cities have the pick. They get coloured television before many of the rural areas can get even a black and white signal. Some of the small centres in my area have had a communication from regional directors of the Post Office Department to the effect that a number of small post offices will be closed because they are not paying their way. This is going to affect thousands of small communities. I want