

Supply—Post Office

were instructed in the manner in which the work was to be accomplished.

After receiving this letter I explained the situation to a dozen or more of the members of the staff of the two post offices concerned, and they were quite satisfied. But I suggest that this suspicion could possibly have been avoided had the staff been informed beforehand of the over-all purpose of these studies. One can understand their feelings when they suddenly discover that a time study is being undertaken. Some outsider arrives and, you know, the very fact that it is someone from Vancouver arouses the suspicion of people in the Kootenays on occasion. I found it easy to explain the situation after I had received the minister's letter but, as I say, it would have been better if an explanation had been offered earlier.

I also received some requests earlier this year from the city of Rossland urging the removal of box rental charges there because Rossland does not enjoy mail delivery. This is a matter I was asked to bring to the attention of the minister, and I am doing so. While he is giving consideration to it, I suggest some thought be given to the policy with respect to box rental charges in the smaller communities generally. I understand the present policy has been in force for a good many years and I suggest it be reviewed to see whether a system can be devised which recognizes the situation which the patrons of these local post offices face.

I also suggest consideration be given to the policy respecting the allocation of boxes in the smaller post offices. I find that on occasion the present system causes some friction. Firms who need a box of a certain size—"drawer" is, I think, the proper name—are unable to obtain the facilities they require. Sometimes ranchers who live miles away from the post office and who only collect their mail once a week require a drawer in which their mail can be placed, because family mail has a tendency to accumulate and require more space.

I also suggest that further consideration should be given to the ventilation of the Nelson and Trail post office buildings. There have been some improvements made but I am still receiving complaints that the ventilation is not adequate—that the lint comes off the bags when the mail is being sorted, creating a dusty atmosphere which the staff considers unhealthy and undesirable.

These are about all the complaints I have to make at the present time. I wish to bring one further matter to the attention of the

Postmaster General. It has been brought to my attention by the stamp collectors in Kootenay West. We have a number of stamp societies and they are of the opinion that not enough imagination is being used in the design of Canadian stamps as compared with states such as Indonesia and some of the Middle East states with far fewer resources than we have. I also suggest—I do not know whether or not the minister would agree—that having published a stamp containing a preview of the three maple leaf flag we might issue one with the red ensign on it in the near future. Anyway, I have been asked to draw this matter to the attention of the minister. These groups are very interested in the quality and design of our stamps and I think it is a good thing they are. My personal view, after looking at hundreds of stamps which have been sent me in contrast to our own rather colourless Canadian stamps, is that their claim is well founded and that we have not yet reached the standard, generally, from an artistic viewpoint, which we should expect in a country such as ours.

With those few constructive and co-operative observations, I resume my seat.

Mr. Hales: My first words must be words of congratulation to the Postmaster General on presenting to this committee his first set of estimates for the Post Office Department. I should also like to congratulate him on his realistic approach to this subject and on the research and study he appears to have put into the affairs of his department during the few months he has been in charge.

I think we are all interested in the operation of the post office because I suppose there is no department of government which is used more by Canadian citizens than the post office. My first interest in the post office was aroused at a very early age when I had a favourite uncle who was postmaster of the Guelph post office. So I have always been interested in the operation of the post office. The Postmaster General spoke about paper balances, and so on. I think he was so right. I think the time has come when the Post Office Department should give serious consideration to presenting estimates in an entirely new way. At present, all revenue goes into a general account, the consolidated account. Then all the expenditures are paid out of the appropriations which parliament grants. In my opinion—and, possibly this was one of the recommendations of the Glassco commission—it would cut down a lot of paperwork if the expenses could be paid out