

it is very much more productive than the general store, but this is by no means proven. What happens is that when a person goes to a supermarket he gives up many services. He gives up the credit that was furnished to him by the general store and the personal attention that was furnished him. Why? Because service as we have traditionally considered it has become too expensive and people are now going without service in order to reduce their cost.

I say to you frankly that if we continue to handle five billion pieces of mail in the same way we handled one billion pieces of mail, the burden on the taxpayers of this country will be such they will revolt against it. So, they did ask us to measure just what service they could do without to reduce the tax burden.

The Saturday delivery is not the necessary service it once was. We are sensitive to what Canada is today. Canada is working on the basis of a five day week. The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce polled its members. I may be out four or five, but the order is correct. Three hundred and two seem to be satisfied and have no objection whatsoever to the five day week. Fourteen said they did. It did not seem proper, at a cost of between \$10 million and \$13 million, to provide service for something in the order of roughly less than 4 per cent of the total population of Canada. With all the rearrangements, the walk evaluation, the rezoning, the settling down process and I am certain with the devotion of the young people in the post office, we will come out with a better service at lower cost to all.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Finish the sentence.

COMBINES—FAILURE BY SUGAR REFINERIES
TO OBEY COURT ORDER

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, on April 23 I directed a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford). I asked him whether he had received a formal complaint charging Canada's big three sugar refineries with failure to obey a court order restricting them from monopolistic practices and, if so, what action the government proposed to take. In my opinion the minister evaded the question. He said it was not the practice to reveal names of those who lodged complaints with the department. This, of course, was not an answer to

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

the question I put to him. I pointed that out to the minister but I received no satisfaction.

The situation in respect of the three major sugar refineries in Canada is one of long standing. They have been accused of monopolistic practices. They have been taken to court and orders have been issued against them. The minister, in my opinion, does not seem to be taking this matter seriously. What is involved here is the whole question of the Combines legislation in Canada and the attitude of the government toward this legislation. If the minister is reluctant to indicate that he does not think these companies should be prosecuted or that this collusion represents a threat to the country, then he should say so. If he thinks it does represent a threat, then he should also say so and indicate that he intends to take some significant action.

I suggest that the Combines legislation in this country has become futile and phony; it just is not working. We are pretending there is some protection when in reality there is not. First of all, the prosecutions which have taken place have been inconclusive. There is no evidence that after an action the situation has improved in the least. Secondly, in order to get action under this legislation one virtually has to put the evidence in the hands of the government. It is rather instructive to look at some of the recent cases which have come before the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission.

• (10:10 p.m.)

With regard to the street paving tenders for the city of Hull, a slip of paper fell out of the tender sheets which indicated that collusion had taken place. This information is contained in a booklet issued by the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. In the case of ready-mix concrete, the companies had their accountants sitting in at the meetings. These cases seem to be the only type brought before the Combines Investigation Branch.

The evil of the present situation is simply that if these companies are going to collude and pretend on the surface that there is competition, we will be getting the worst of all worlds. If there is collusion, I think the time has come to take action other than that taken under the combines legislation. I suggest the type of action which should be taken is strict regulation and the removal of tariff protection in these areas. Certainly, we should enact legislation which has teeth in it, something which has not been the case for a long time.

It may be that in some industries a monopoly situation is inevitable. If this is the