

## APPENDIX "A"

(Editor's note: Pursuant to order made Monday, October 6, p. 3275, the following are the answers to the questions on the order paper then listed.)

## RURAL MAIL DELIVERY ON SATURDAY

## Question No. 20—Mr. Cossitt:

1. Has the Post Office Department been studying ways and means of discontinuing rural mail delivery on Saturdays and, if so, what are all the details?

2. (a) Was a letter written by Mr. G. A. Lambourn on this subject to rural residents in a certain area and, if so, did it ask people to reply to a questionnaire stating "yes" or "no" in regard to their opinions on the subject (b) did Mr. Lambourn's letter state in part "It is felt the same conditions of work should be applied to rural mail contractors" as compared to urban?

3. Did the Post Office Department take into account proper comparison between farm and urban residents such as (a) rural contractors are not on an hourly wage with vacation pay, pensions, etc., but work by contract (b) whether or not elimination of Saturday services would also eliminate newspaper delivery services to thousands of Canadians?

4. Will the Post Office Department reconsider any proposed policy to eliminate Saturday rural mail delivery and specifically, is it aware as to whether or not members of parliament are receiving numerous complaints on the subject?

**Mr. Gary F. McCauley (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General):** 1. Yes.

As part of its ongoing function to evaluate all services provided versus their costs and the changing needs for them. However, no action was taken one way or another until 1977 when in response to requests from many rural route contractors that they be permitted to enjoy a five day work week, a system was established whereby the frequency of rural routes might be reduced provided certain conditions were met; those conditions are that:

- (1) The member of parliament in whose area the rural route operates is consulted and in agreement with the conducting of a survey.
  - (2) A survey is made from which 66.6 per cent or more of the persons affected indicate that they are in favour of the reduced frequency.
  - (3) The local member of parliament is informed of the survey results and should the required two-thirds of the persons affected have indicated approval—gives his endorsement to the frequency reduction.
2. (a) Yes, his name has appeared on letters sent to persons served by rural route in that district asking whether or not they are in favour of a proposed frequency reduction.

(b) Yes, it is understood that such phraseology was used in Mr. Lambourn's letters. It may be explained however, that action to reduce rural route frequency has almost invariably been instigated by the rural route contractors concerned—who themselves use that phraseology when requesting consideration for a frequency reduction.

3. (a) As indicated in the foregoing actions to initiate rural route frequency reductions had almost entirely been as a result of requests for that action by the rural route contractors concerned. It might be noted in that context that when rural route frequency is reduced from six to five trips per week, payments made to the contractors are not reduced at *pro rata* (16.6 per cent) but, recognizing that the same amount of mail will be handled over the week, payments are reduced only to the extent of the costs (gasoline, etc. relating to vehicle operation) which will not be incurred by the contractor as a result of the frequency reduction. In no case has a payment reduction exceeded 10 per cent—with the average being much less—when the frequency has been reduced.

(b) As far as possible efforts are made to dissuade a rural route contractor who requests a frequency reduction when it is apparent that the rural route in question is in an area where newspaper delivery is made through the mails. However, if the contractor persists, if more than two-thirds of the affected residents agree to the reduction, and if the local member of parliament endorses the reduction then it is possible that subscribers to some publications will receive delivery on a five day per week instead of a six day per week frequency.

4. Canada Post has no policy at this time to eliminate Saturday delivery except, as noted, where the rural route contractor has requested it, where more than two-thirds of the persons affected indicate that they are in favour, and where the local member of parliament has endorsed that action.

Canada Post has received some representations and enquiries on the status of rural route service from members of parliament.

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

## Question No. 36—Mr. Cossitt:

Is a person required, under the Unemployment Insurance Act, to still be available for work during a benefit period when they suffer a death in the family that requires approximately three days for burial, etc. and, if so, will the