

class mail. Thus the minister further damages the sovereignty of Canadian enterprises.

• (5:50 p.m.)

It seems to me that if the Postmaster General had really wanted to curb the many errors and weaknesses in the administration of the department he would have given the publishers of newspapers, journals and periodicals an opportunity to come before the department and state their case.

Perhaps the most vital part of the entire inquiry relating to the newspaper and publishing industry is that part relating to farm publications. More than a few of these publications have their backs to the wall because of increased postage costs. I am convinced that the Minister's explanation of Post Office departmental costs does not accurately reflect the real costs of handling second class newspapers. If all such publications were to cease publishing and if the Post Office Department were no longer to handle such publications, what saving would be effected? Not one major delivery system would be changed. Trucks would continue to deliver from farm to farm or from point to point and the same rail cars would be used. The only difference would be that revenues would fall while expenses would continue as they are. I believe that the picture presented by the minister with respect to rural and farm publications, which are so vital to the rural communities of Canada, is wrong. When the minister says the delivery of such publications is loaded with unjustified and unjustifiable costs, I submit he is wrong. Perhaps we could consider publications other than farm newspapers. The minister talks about subsidizing business. In that connection may I read from notes prepared by the Graphic Arts Industries Association for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin), dated March 20, 1969. They say:

The magnitude of postage rate increases instituted Nov. 1, 1968 and April 1, 1969, and the abruptness with which these have been made effective in their totality, will have the most adverse effects upon the Canadian printing and allied industries of any setback experienced since the depression of the 1930's. The paper and allied industries will share the consequences—

Directly or indirectly, virtually all Canadian businesses and industries will be retarded. Communications within countless national and regional organizations, representing nearly every sector of Canadian society, will be sharply restricted. Federal and provincial revenues from corporate and personal income taxation, and especially from sales taxes, will be significantly reduced. These effects are self-evident.

### *Postal Service*

A number of publications have already been killed, and more will die, without hope of being resurrected. Unemployment has already been caused across the country, and more will follow. Opportunities for expanded employment in many companies from coast to coast have been destroyed.

There is more than one side to the case for condemning the increase in postal charges for publications. The Canadian Welfare Council, in a communiqué dated May 15, 1969, had the following to say:

New postal rates have gone into effect, bearing down hard on all the newsletters and journals that have enjoyed second class mailing privileges: a destructive measure that weakens the flow of ideas in Canada and should be challenged.

The action is justified by the government on the grounds that the Post Office should "pay its way"; it is a "business"; mail should not be "subsidized". The Post Office has not only clashed headlong with its employees through get-tough policies; it has also rescinded the idea of public service in a vital area.

Service is the only commodity the Post Office has to offer. Why does the Post Master General insist on lowering the traditional service of his department?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member's time has expired.

### PRIVILEGE

MR. BROADBENT—TABLING IN FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COST-BENEFIT STUDY—MOTION TO REFER TO PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** In the two minutes or so left before six o'clock may I, with the consent of hon. members, give a ruling in connection with an important point raised by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) earlier today.

During routine proceedings today the hon. member raised a question of privilege concerning the tabling in the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs of a certain document. The hon. member went on to give certain details of events which had occurred in the committee and referred to a statement made in the house on April 23 by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council. I suggested at the time that I wanted to look into the matter because it appeared to be very complex. It related to matters that had occurred in committee and I was of the opinion that it would be very difficult to give a judgment then and there with fairness without having had an opportunity to