

## Post Office Act

been able to deal with the problem of changing transportation facilities.

This is also a problem in the United States. In that country all sorts of systems have been tried to speed up the delivery of mail. Sorting the mail while in highway transportation has been tried. I understand that a gyro-stabilized truck is used whereby the body of the truck moves with the contours of the road. I am told they have not been able to find employees who can work in these trucks because people become sick operating under these conditions. We have not been able to replace the railroads in this regard. This is just one example of the changes that have been made in the delivery of mail. They are not always advantageous.

Some of the suggestions made by the Postmaster General—and I agree with the previous speaker in this respect—are probably necessary and some of them may even be advantageous. But I believe we still have not really faced the problem—and the minister will have to face it—of what does and does not make the service pay. Then we have to be honest about cutting out those things that do not make the service pay and considering those that do make it pay.

First class mail was a problem six months ago. It is not any more a problem now than it was at that time. It was an immediate problem when we were considering raising the postage rate for first class mail. First class mail is not the culprit. We are not getting as good a service as we did. The new proposals would reduce the service in all areas and yet we would have to pay more for it. It really will not make any difference to Eaton's catalogues. It will not make any difference to our throwing away what I might call household mail, or perhaps even to the mail members of parliament send to their constituents, which we think has some merit. The same thing applies to Eaton's; they believe their flyers have some influence on the recipients, but this is not always the case.

However, this change in service will make a great difference to those operating a business and using first class mail where other services are not readily available. There are many such areas in Canada. There are in this country many areas where mail is still the main source of communication and five-cent, first class, mail is the means of communication by which business is conducted. These people are not able to take advantage of some of the less expensive means of communication for business purposes. They have to operate

through the mail and they are the ones who will be penalized.

We have talked a great deal about some of the changes that could be made. Yet *Time* magazine and *Reader's Digest*, those pseudo-Canadian magazines, are costing a great deal more than the minister will gain by way of increasing the postage rate of first class mail. These are just two items in the total picture.

I believe the committee should make a decision on this question. We are all aware that the status of *Reader's Digest* and *Time* magazine was a political decision which really had nothing to do with good housekeeping or good bookkeeping. Therefore the minister should not be greatly influenced by that argument, because as I understand it he looks at things on a dollars and cents basis. The argument that was used in respect of *Time* and *Reader's Digest* does not fit into that category.

• (4:30 p.m.)

The minister will probably not give much consideration to the arguments which have been put forward by those interested in maintaining the delivery in rural areas of dailies and more particularly weeklies perhaps because he may consider them to be based on sentimental rather than economic reasons. We know that three newspapers have closed down, one of them being the *Family Herald and Weekly Star*, perhaps not as a result of the anticipated increase in postal rates but because they had been operating on a very slim margin. For city dwellers this may not matter much one way or the other, but for those who have been raised on the farm and who are living in the farming community *The Western Producer*, the *Family Herald and Weekly Star* and the *Winnipeg Free Press Weekly* have been more than just newspapers. For many years they have served many functions on the farm. I suppose they were more useful on farms than anywhere else. They were read from cover to cover. When one got up in the morning one could light the fire with them. I see there are some hon. members here who remember to what uses these newspapers could be put. They played a great role in helping the farmer doctor his cow if she was sick. A farmer could increase his wife's culinary achievements by pointing out to her new recipes contained in these papers, and his children could read the comics. There was something in them for everyone, and a sentimental value was attached to them which I think was worth more than the money they cost.