

Post Office Act

order system. We put an end to the program of closing post offices. We introduced the Saturday wicket service. We introduced the assured mail program which is being implemented in all the large centres in Canada. We are in the process of inaugurating this year a letter carrier service in more than 20 cities throughout the country. We have introduced the post-pack system, and we are working on many new systems. We have started the coding system and the mechanization system which will provide much faster service.

I know that the service is not perfect and will never be perfect, but I assure hon. members that it is getting better and better. Despite the fact that it is not perfect, I think our system is one of the best in the world and I am proud to be associated with the department and with a team of about 50,000 dedicated people who also take pride in working for the Post Office of Canada.

Mr. McCleave: The nice thing about you, Sir, is that you stick up for your own. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Postmaster General (Mr. Côté) has just said that he has put forward a number of times the arguments in favour of increasing the postage rates. That may be true. He is a very persuasive individual and a minister whom we like—and that says something for a member of the present cabinet—but I am afraid he has not convinced us that these increases are necessary. He certainly has not convinced the public of that either.

I point out that the two amendments now before the House, one in the name of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) and the other in my name, although slightly different in their wording seek exactly the same effect, namely, the elimination of clause 3 from the minister's bill. Clause 3 raises the basic rate for first-class mail to seven cents beginning July 1 and to eight cents on January 1, 1972. The only other provisions in clause 3 are for different rates for pieces of first-class mail that weigh more than one ounce. I am emphasizing the fact that that is what is in clause 3. So far as we are concerned, it is the heart of this bill and we think it ought not to be there. As has been said a good many times, this is the portion of the postal service that either pays its way or comes closest to paying its way, and we do not see why extra money should be sought from this part of the service.

Reference has been made a number of times to some of the other ways in which money could be obtained, by cutting out the subsidization of certain foreign publications, and so on. We also emphasize the fact that this is the portion of the postal service most used by the ordinary people of this country, the people whose incomes are already too low, whose incomes are already too heavily taxed, and any further imposition such as this on those on low income is very hard for our people to take.

We like the Postmaster General. We enjoy listening to him. But he has not convinced us of the necessity of these increases. We therefore are voting for the amendment to strike clause 3 from the bill and leave the first-class rate where it is, at six cents. In our view it is

[Mr. Côté (Longueuil).]

already too high, but certainly it should not go any higher.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the said motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the said motion will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 75(11), the vote will be deferred.

It is moved by the Postmaster General (Mr. Côté):

That Bill C-240 be amended by striking out lines 28 to 31 on page 7 thereof and by substituting therefor the following:

"9. (1) Section 3, 5 and 6 of this act and subsections 17(1), (2), (3) and (5) of the Post Office Act as enacted by section 4 of this act shall come into force on the 1st day of July, 1971.

(2) Subsection 17(4) of the Post Office Act as enacted by section 4 of this act shall come into force on the 1st day of April, 1972."

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

● (8:30 p.m.)

Motion (Mr. Côté) agreed to.

The House divided on motion No. 1 (Mr. Dinsdale) which was negatived on the following division:

● (8:40 p.m.)

YEAS

Messrs:

Alexander	Horner
Alkenbrack	Howe
Baldwin	Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre)
Barnett	Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand)
Beaudoin	Korchinski
Bell	Lambert
Bigg	(Bellechasse)
Carter	La Salle
Code	Latulippe
Danforth	Lundrigan
Dinsdale	MacInnis (Mrs.)
Flemming	MacKay
Fortin	MacLean
Gilbert	Macquarrie
Godin	MacRae
Grills	McCleave
Hales	
Harding	