

Mr. GRIESBACH: They may be the wrong people.

WITNESS: In the case of small postmasters it is very difficult to get them to take the position at all.

By the Chairman:

Q. I have two cases in my mind in which I am very deeply interested. You know one case. Can you give me the dates between the retirement of that postmaster and the appointment of his successor?—A. I cannot but I know there was considerable delay.

Q. More than two months' delay?—A. I think there was.

Q. Do you pretend to tell me that if you had the power of appointment it would take two months to fill a vacancy?—A. Under the patronage system a postmaster was generally appointed before we knew the other man was dead.

Q. I am not talking about that at all. Eliminate the patronage; would you not be able to make an appointment to that office within at least two weeks?—A. We would notify the Commission.

Q. I am not talking about the Commission. If you had the power to make appointments under the old plan—A. We strictly depended on the member, and he was prompt as a rule. Of course, he knew every person, he knew the wants of the place and depended on the people.

Q. The cases I have in mind are very important cases. The location is where a considerable business is being done. They have no bank within twenty miles. They are depending on the Post Office Order Branch for the conduct of their business in regard to their payments, and largely in regard to their receipts. They have no officer there to provide either the one or the other, to sell them post office orders or to cash post office orders.—A. I would say that the public interest would suffer in a case like that.

Q. It is cases of that kind that justify investigation. It is not for the purposes of patronage that this investigation is being held. The prime object of this investigation is to discover some method by which cases of that kind may be remedied.—A. I think that in a case of that kind the best way is to apply to the member for a postmaster.

Q. I do not want them to apply to me. They have applied but I do not want them to apply.—A. If a member does not undertake the duty, then it is a difficult problem. Our experience was that the members usually did their duty pretty well.

By Mr. Johnston:

Q. Does it take more time to appoint rural postmasters under this Act, on the average, than it did under the old plan?—A. Yes, I think it does.

Q. It takes more time?—A. Yes, I think so. I am not making any charge against the Commission in saying that, because I think the Commission does its work as promptly as it can be done.

By Hon. Mr. Calder:

Q. But the system followed tends to delay.—A. I do not think it is as good as the patronage system.

Q. So far as country postmasters are concerned?—A. So far as country postmasters are concerned.

By Mr. Johnston:

Q. What about postmasters with a revenue of over \$1,000?—A. There is not so much trouble with them because there are more applicants, and they seem to be settled more rapidly.

[Dr. R. M. Coulter.]