

*Supply—Post Office*

advantage of the opportunity presented by these estimates to look back over my years of service as a postmaster at Elmira, Ontario. I should like also to express appreciation for the co-operation I received from many friends in the Post Office Department as well as the general public who were exceptionally co-operative over these many years.

Since my retirement about six years ago, I have been tremendously impressed by the many changes that have been made. This is especially noticeable in my own riding of Waterloo North. Recently, I had the pleasure of accompanying the Postmaster General and other members of parliament to the official opening ceremonies of our new office in Kitchener-Waterloo, which is a real credit to the Post Office Department. This building was planned and nearly completed by the former government, and the present government played its part in the final completion of the new building. If we had such co-operation and less politics in some other departments greater strides would be made in the erection of such fine buildings all over Canada.

Waterloo has doubled its population in 10 years and Kitchener has doubled its population in 25 years. This new office represents a great expansion for these twin cities where industrial development has been outstanding and where Waterloo university and the Lutheran university have made tremendous strides. I should like to stray from this subject for just one minute, Mr. Chairman, to say that these universities are certainly in need of government financial assistance. The legislation being passed to assist students with loans for their education will mean a greater expansion by the universities to accommodate the ever increasing number of students anxious to continue their studies.

The Post Office Department has often been referred to as the barometer of business. During my term of office in this department men of business, industry, labour and agriculture inquired often about the increase in revenue in order to analyse the development of Canada's economy as a whole. May I suggest to the Postmaster General that a second look be extended to cities like Kitchener and Waterloo where new areas are being opened and new homes built which are in need of facilities pertaining to sub-post offices. Many letters cross my desk asking for such new sub-post offices. According to my experience as a former postmaster, I find such post offices are invaluable to those new sections and, in

[Mr. Weichel.]

most cases, are able to carry themselves financially.

Another point I should like to make to our Postmaster General concerns the great strides that have been made in the rural mail carrier service. This was previously mentioned in my speech in this house on April 13, 1961. This service has given an additional number of Canadians the opportunity to enjoy this privilege for the first time. We realize that these carriers are spending more time in preparing the mail for delivery and longer hours in covering their routes. Some carriers have been compensated for this extra time, but others have not received any increase for some time. May I suggest that, owing to the higher cost of living, such pay increases be given every consideration.

As one who has been immensely interested in public relations, I realize the fine part that can be taken by these men in this department, and I would recommend that more civil servants be appointed to these important positions. The public relations officer has done a fine job in the courteous behaviour of the post office staff to Mr. John Public. The showing of pictures to service clubs and schools, at which time the officer explains in detail other important matters such as registration, insurance, c.o.d. and special delivery, has lightened the load of the local post office staff. As a former supervisor postmaster covering about ten offices, I realize the extra time involved when the postmaster has to carry out such duties. However, I understand that such supervisors now come from larger offices which greatly assist the smaller office postmaster. This is a step in the right direction.

We well understand how mechanized the post office is becoming, and the amount of research that has been done. Perhaps most of this research is being directed to the larger offices. As I mentioned in my speech of April 13, 1961, this research could also be directed to some of the smaller offices if we are planning from day to day to improve the postal facilities. I should like to bring to the notice of the Postmaster General the advisability of introducing small cancelling machines for the smaller offices, say from grade 30 on. This could be applied in a situation such as the one with which I have some experience in Elmira. At about five o'clock the 30 industries would bring letters, and so forth, for mailing to the post office. This really caused an overload of mail and the staff had great difficulty in attempting to hand stamp the stuff for evening dispatch.