

think they could possibly get it as well in any other way. It would be like the condition when they used to have cheese factories in our country. If the farmer had to haul his own milk he could not do it at all. So they got one man to haul from the end of the route to the factory. The rural mail delivery is much on the same principle. I think, possibly, we do not all realize the difficulty of instituting the rural mail service due to the very bad surveys in a great many portions of Canada and the laying out of the roads. The trouble is that there are very many small cross roads with people living on them, and it is impossible for the carrier to reach them all. For that reason there are sections where it is almost impossible to establish a rural mail delivery and serve everybody. Hence the impossibility in some cases of cutting out the little post office. I realize the difficulty because I do not think the surveys anywhere are as bad as they are in New Brunswick. When complaints are made about not getting a rural mail service I should like the people who complain to consider this feature of it. I think possibly that we have the most efficient man in charge of the rural mail service that there is in the public employ and doubtless his troubles are endless. Probably there is no official in the employ of the government that gets as many requests for a public service as Mr. Anderson, superintendent of the rural mail service.

Mr. SALES: You must be getting some new ones.

Mr. CALDWELL: I do not get many. I believe that in a great many cases it would be possible to put on a free delivery without costing any more money than it does at present. That is where the roads are so laid out that it is possible to cut out the local post office and so effect an economy. I know that has been done in some cases in New Brunswick and a saving effected. I would also like to join in the request of other hon. members that the rural mail carriers get the legal holiday. I think last Christmas was the first holiday the rural mail carriers have had, and they appreciated it very much. With regard to delay in the mail delivery the people in our section of the country do not complain if the carrier fails to come on a stormy day or if the roads are bad. If we get a service five or six days a week we know that we are getting mail oftener than we would if the service was only three times a week.

Mr. LAPIERRE: Would you favour cutting out the trains on Christmas Day?

Mr. CALDWELL: That is a different proposition. People travel a great deal on trains then and they do not have very much time to read their mail. I do not think the two things are comparable at all. I think every rural mail carrier is entitled to have Christmas and a few of the other holidays, and I do not imagine the public would suffer very much if they were granted the privilege.

Mr. SALES: I sympathize with my fellow members who have rural mail deliveries and cannot get their mail on holidays. I come from a constituency where we have not anything—we have not a stick, nor a brick, nor as far as I know any rural mail delivery—consequently my troubles are very small compared with those of my colleague in this House.

Mr. McBRIDE: I would say I am fully in favour of the contract system in connection with mail delivery. Some ten people in my constituency asked the highest pay for mail delivery. I told some of them that if they were not satisfied with what they were being paid they had better arrange to have fresh tenders called for which was done. Mr. Anderson called for tenders and there was not one instance where he failed in getting the mail carried for less than the old rate. Indeed a number of the people who had been complaining sought my aid to try and get back the contract at the rate of the lowest tender. I believe that mail carriers should be given a holiday; I see no reason why they should not be granted the privilege. I hear some people from the prairies complaining about going ten miles for their mail. I have to go twenty-six miles for my mail. In winter I have to travel thirty-four miles by another route. I am not complaining about it I do not think the government can be expected to provide a mail delivery for every district where, perhaps, but very few people reside. I know one place where a post office was petitioned for by thirty people. I made investigation and found that while there were thirty-two names on the petition for the office it would only have served five people, and four of them were old bachelors.

Mr. CALDWELL: Perhaps that is the reason they were old bachelors.

Mr. ROSS (Simcoe): Just a word or two at this late hour. Last year I took occasion to speak briefly on the subject and advocated a holiday for the mail carriers. To-night I advocate it again. Holidays are granted to the letter carriers in the urban centres, and