

*Supply—Post Office*

agreement made that when second class periodicals come into this country from foreign sources of publication, be it the United States or Great Britain or France for that matter, the Canadian post office will be reimbursed for the weight carried and the mileage traversed in the Dominion of Canada. This matter has been a sore point with Canadian publishers for many years and has been taken up frequently with the Canadian Post Office Department no matter what government has been in power, no matter who the postmaster general has been.

Always the same answer is given. Nothing can be done about it until the world postal congress meets in Montevideo, Uruguay; Madras, India; Cairo, Egypt; or Rheims, France, where it is going to meet five years from now. The world postal union only meets every five years, so there is no sense in kicking in the intervening four years because nothing can be done. Protests have been made to the Canadian Post Office Department about the fact that millions of American magazines cross the border into Canada every month and the Canadian post office hauls them gladly across this broad dominion without getting any share of the revenue paid to the United States post office for those periodicals.

The Canadian publishing world was told this matter would be taken up at the world postal union convention in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1963. Everything was going to be taken up there and the cards were going to be laid on the table to see if we could not get some revenue for the Canadian postal service from these foreign periodicals that enter Canada, but since they are mailed in a foreign country that country keeps the revenue. Some hon. members may recall that there was some difficulty in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1963 and the world postal union conference held every five years was postponed a year to be held in Vienna, Austria, last month.

Canadian publishers spoke to the Post Office Department and expressed the sincere hope that the Postmaster General, an able businessman, would represent the Canadian government there; but due to the death of Hon. Jack Garland, which we all regret, the Postmaster General was given the onerous task, which he carries out with dignity and efficiency, of looking after the affairs of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and he was unable to go to Austria. But there were representatives of the Canadian postal service there.

I think the Canadian publishing world is entitled to a statement as to what arrangements have been made so that the Canadian post office may be reimbursed by these foreign publishers, who mail in foreign parts with the result that the foreign governments keep the postage revenue for the material which our postal service transports across this broad dominion for them. I should like to quote from a brief, one among many, submitted to the Canadian Post Office Department as long ago as 1959, in which Canadian publishers made this request of our Post Office Department:

—that methods should be established whereby the Canadian Post Office Department will receive from foreign governments compensation for services rendered in the handling of foreign mail within the confines of this country.

For many years past, the Canadian and United States governments have checked the volume of parcel post moving across the international border on two days a year.

They take two days far removed from the Christmas rush and far removed from the summer slump. They take two such typical days and multiply the figure for an average day by 365 to arrive at the weight of mail crossing the border and check the distance it moved by checking the addresses.

Taking those two days as being typical of the year-round volume of parcel post handled by the two countries for each other, post office departments calculate how much money should be paid by one government to the other government for parcel post services rendered in their country. We contend that such a system can be established in Canada for second class mail. Under such a system, foreign governments would pay to the Canadian Post Office Department a proper share of the second class revenue that they receive from publishers in their country, for the haulage services that the Canadian Post Office Department performs in handling the second class mail originating abroad.

During his outline of the affairs of the Post Office Department the Postmaster General referred to the fact that much American mail is trucked into Canada and mailed in Canadian post offices where they pay a rate which the Canadian post office keeps exclusively. That is all well and good. Canadian publishers appreciate the fact that there was an increase in the rate some time ago on such mail to 5 cents a pound. Previously the rate had been very low, ruinous in fact, and the 5 cent rate was welcomed by Canadian publishers.

But there are still hundreds and hundreds of periodicals printed abroad—by “abroad” I do not necessarily mean off this continent—that are mailed at their city of publication and come into this country. I am referring