

*Post Office*

should take a serious look at some of the isolated areas and see the very real problems which exist. I suggest to the minister that he spend a month with me at Peerless Lake this summer. I will set up a nice little teepee and have some moose meat dried and waiting for him. I would like him to try to conduct his business from there for a period of a month by means of the mail service his department provides. If he did so, I do not think he would be so quick to pat himself on the back about the greatness of the service of his department.

I would invite him and any other minister or any other member on the government side who is dedicated to speaking as an apologist for the government to go to these areas for a month or so to experience what the people who live there experience all their lives. I am sure we would have fairly speedy action if ministers took the trouble to go down there and look at the situation.

● (1630)

**An hon. Member:** Such as what?

**Mr. Yewchuk:** Such as setting up regular post offices and a postal service. It is a very simple solution. Another service that is provided in some of these places such as, for example, small trading posts—this is the best that the minister can do—is simply to have a mailbag which is filled up with letters to people in an isolated settlement picked up by whoever happens to be going that way at some time during the month, and dropped at the store. Then everybody who happens to wander by, scrambles through the mailbag to see whether or not he can find a letter there. That is supposed to be good postal service.

Just imagine what would happen if the people in Toronto had to harness a team of horses and go 40 miles to pick up their mail every day. I wonder if the minister would permit a postal service in Toronto which would consist of a mailbag being delivered to a grocery store at the corner of the street and people within a ten-block radius having to dig through the bag to get their mail.

What I am trying to impress upon the minister is that just because people live in small numbers in isolated areas is no reason for ignoring them and depriving them of services which in southern Canada are considered a necessity, not a luxury, and are taken for granted. This is not the case in northern portions of our country. I would like the minister to spend a little time on that problem. I agree that he always sends back polite letters, but that is not what I want from him. It is the content of the letters that I would like improved. I would like to read in these letters that the minister will do something about the problem. I do not want to see letters in which the minister says he recognizes there is a problem and thanks me for bringing it to his attention; he will see what can be done. That is not good enough.

The minister may be a polite man—and everybody appreciates politeness—but that is not what the job of running the Post Office Department is all about. The minister should concern himself with providing the best possible service to all the people of Canada—and we in the north have not had it. I think it is time a complete reassessment of the mail service to isolated communities was carried out and speedy action taken to correct the

problems which I have described. It is time the minister got out of his comfortable chair and visited some of the more remote areas, talked to the people there and asked them whether they are happy with the services he is providing. The fact that, as he stated, he went across the country to various cities, and the people to whom he spoke all seemed happy and seemed to be working, does not absolve him of the responsibility to people in isolated communities in the north, because the picture there is entirely different.

The solution is to establish a series of small post offices a reasonable distance apart so that people can travel on horseback and get their mail in an hour or two. I realize that this would increase the cost, based on the income which would be derived from these post offices, but it seems to me that the rest of Canada should be willing to pay for increased cost of mail delivery to the northern regions because the rest of Canada is benefiting a great deal from the resources in the north. We have all types of resources—timber, oil, minerals and furs. Thus, the northern parts of Canada are contributing a great deal to the country as a whole. In return for that contribution they are entitled to reasonable postal, telephone and transportation services which those in the south have come to take for granted.

The other subject which I would like to speak about for a few minutes relates to the changes that were made in the postal rate, and the reclassification of certain professional journals and newspapers which has taken place in the past three or four years. I will describe the problem by using a particular journal as an example, namely, the journal of the Canadian Medical Association. I am glad to see a member of the medical profession here. I hope he will listen carefully. Perhaps he will be able to influence the minister, because I doubt I will be able to do so. I should like to quote from that journal a few sentences written by A. D. Kelly. I think he is a doctor; he has a British degree and I am not quite sure what it means. I assume he is a medical man who also happens to be the editor of the Canadian Medical Association journal.

**Mr. Railton:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. Dr. A. D. Kelly graduated from the University of Toronto with the degree of MB. That was the degree at that time.

**Mr. Yewchuk:** Mr. Speaker, I hope you will give me an extra 30 seconds at the end of my 15 minutes to compensate me for lost time. Dr. Kelly wrote:

My equanimity has been disturbed, my sunny disposition has been clouded—

That was back in 1969.

—my faith in the Just Society has been shaken and, to put it briefly, I am up tight.

That means he is rather tense over the whole situation.

I am managing editor of Canadian Medical Association publications and things have become unmanageable.

That is his assessment. He goes on to say:

For fifty-eight years the CMAJ has enjoyed statutory second-class mailing privileges and our postal rates were low. We are not alone in this because I understand that 5,200 other Canadian publications are similarly classified. I have been aware that the Post Office was losing money and I expected that an increase in