

hours of the day, I have not been able to see the justification for this fee, especially as my impression is that the injustice even goes beyond the explanation I have given already,—or the lack of justification, shall I say. In fact I am told that most commercial importers do not actually have their goods examined as they cross the bridge. They are holders of a special permit which allows them, without examination, to have those goods pass the bridge and, in fact, the examination takes place the following Monday or Tuesday in the normal hours of business at the collector's office.

The matter was particularly aggravating our area because a very small value of the commercial import was involved. At Fort Frances we have not had a seven day a week rail service to provide railway delivery of flowers over the week-end. If there was a funeral, the commercial florist in Fort Frances was unable to obtain his flowers from a Winnipeg source. Under those circumstances, to secure flowers for a Monday funeral, he would place his order in Minneapolis as there was an American train terminating across the river at International Falls.

He had two grievances: one, it was uneconomical as the value of the product he was bringing in was probably \$5 or less; and the special charge of \$5 made is eventually charged to the customer, with the result that when people wised up, as they do in these communities, those wanting wreaths on Monday morning realized they could go across to International Falls, buy those wreaths from the International Falls florists, bring them across the bridge themselves; and as it was called a non-commercial transaction, they did not come under the \$5 charge.

Secondly, taking the winter set-up, the train comes in about seven bring it on Monday morning, and with a perishable article, he would like to bring it across at the earliest possible hour. The customs people are fully staffed on that bridge at seven-fifteen—in fact, all night; but if he brings those flowers across on the Monday morning earlier than eight o'clock, he is again charged the \$5 special fee.

This, as I say, is simply tossed in with the thought I might find some sympathy in the minds of other members of parliament who might see the implications of it in their own riding. I do this with the fullest understanding of the administration because, as I say, it has been a subject of long-standing correspondence with officials of the department and seemingly I have not been able to dent their feelings in this regard.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sim, would you like to reply first; and then perhaps we can have some further questions.

Mr. SIM: If I have been unable to persuade the hon. gentleman in private conversation, that there is any justification for what we are doing, I doubt whether I will have much success in speaking to this matter in a public way.

In a general way our hours of service to the commercial people are regarded as fairly generous. We give much longer service than the banks. We are open every day from eight to five. Most people in business regulate their affairs so that they do their business within these hours of service. There was a time when people serving the public doing jobs of one kind or another, had to work long hours because it was the habit of people to come in to make their purchases at any hours that suited them. Business generally has got away from that and you now find an eight-hour day and five-day week.

Frankly, the charges made for this sort of special service is a sort of penalty for doing business after regular hours. I think that is the justification for the charge itself.

Quite apart from any penal aspect, the business of reporting goods through customs is a serious matter. It may seem more serious to me than it would to some hon. gentlemen, but it has to be done in orderly fashion. No one gets