

the department has been operating has made it difficult to recruit the rank and file of postal employees. As the Leader of the Government has said, it would be doubly difficult to recruit a staff if the government, in resisting the march of progress, forced its employees to work longer hours than do industrial workers and other civil servants.

I compliment the Post Office Department on the way it has handled this situation. It inaugurated the five-day week for civil servants in all communities where that custom was firmly established. There was no obligation or compunction to give postal employees the five-day week; but why should they not have it? This is not the nineteenth century; it is the twentieth century, and modern production methods are sufficient to maintain Canada's production level on the basis of a five-day week. Canada is one of the largest and best producing countries in the world, and the efficiency of our government employees cannot be enhanced by depriving them of the general conditions enjoyed by industrial and other workers throughout the world, or certainly on this continent. I wish to take objection to the implication that the difficulty in which the Post Office Department finds itself has resulted from the introduction of the five-day week for its employees. And finally I would point out that we are certainly not establishing any precedent.

**Hon. Mr. Crerar:** May I ask the honourable gentleman if he thinks the five-day week is the established practice in the rural communities of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Roebuck:** It is becoming so in rural communities and everywhere else.

**Hon. Mr. Crerar:** Among farmers?

**Hon. Mr. Roebuck:** Not among farmers. The honourable gentleman asked me about rural communities. Farmers constitute only one portion of our diversely populated rural communities. Canada is rapidly becoming an industrial country, and industry today is a greater factor in Canada's production than agriculture, important as that is. Farmers are their own bosses and can work whatever hours they please, whereas industrial workers and office employees are in a much different position.

**Hon. Paul H. Bouffard:** Honourable senators, I did not intend to take part in this debate. I am not concerned with the fact that the Post Office Department has been incurring small deficits in the handling of registered mail. This service has been given the public ever since the establishment of the

Post Office Department, and I do not believe the department would think for one moment of depriving Canadians of this service now.

I am not very much concerned either about the inauguration of a shorter working week for Post Office employees. The department can hardly expect its employees to work a six or seven-day week in communities where industrial and other workers are operating on a five-day week; and I certainly do not think it has been proven during this debate that the department has established the five-day week unduly. Actually, this is a small part of the operation of the department and something over which it has really no control.

There is no doubt that most people are disappointed that an increase is being made in the postage on first-class mail. The Post Office Department is a public service, and as such some of its branches operate in non-competitive fields, while others, such as the second-class mail service, operate in highly competitive fields. A public service must support that part of its operations which function on a competitive basis. In other words, if part of the service suffers a deficit, the balance of the service must cover the deficit, to ensure a successful overall operation.

I am quite sure that in seeking authority to increase certain rates the department must have taken into consideration the large number of new buildings it has erected throughout Canada in order to provide adequate service. Now, a portion of the construction costs, together with a portion of the cost of salaries for additional employees in an expanding service, must be met by revenue derived from the second-class mail service. Consequently, the revenue contributed from this source is beneficial to the operation of the first-class mail service. If revenue from the second-class mail service were to disappear, I am afraid that rates would have to be doubled on first-class mail. Therefore, I feel that we should give this whole subject careful study before we force the department to increase rates on second-class mail. We must remember that revenue from the second-class mail service will still permit ordinary first-class mail to be delivered for five cents. I think we should be very careful not to interfere with second-class mail service.

Honourable senators, I am going to support the bill, because I think the Post Office Department is in a much better position to consider these questions than we are. We have not had the benefit of a detailed inquiry, and I think we should be careful not to