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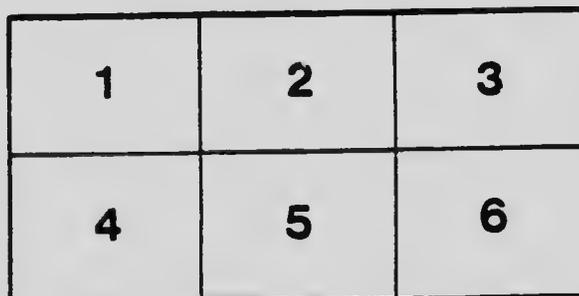
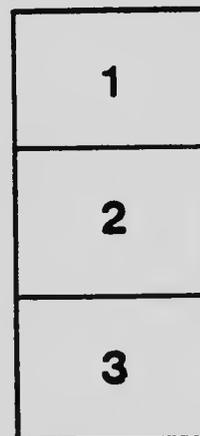
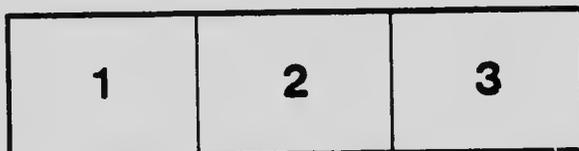
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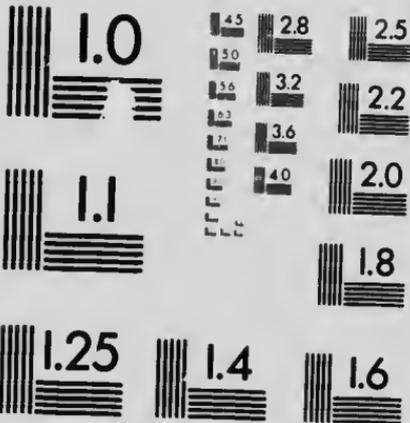
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**Report of the Joint Meeting of
Canadian Press Association
and Canadian Press, Limited,
held in Toronto on Nov. 20, 1912
and of the Interview with The
Honorable, The Postmaster-
General, on November 23, 1912**

22 p. 800



Proceedings of the Joint Meeting

THE employment of an expert to conduct a thorough investigation into the cost of handling second-class matter by the Post Office Department was decided upon at a joint meeting of Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited, held in Toronto, on Wednesday, November 20, 1912. The meeting was called because of authoritative reports from Ottawa that the Post Office Department has in contemplation an increase in the rate and other changes in the Postal Act and regulations relating to second-class matter. November 20 was selected as the date of meeting because publishers of large daily newspapers from every province in Canada would be in Toronto then in attendance at the annual meeting of Canadian Press, Limited. The selection of this date did not permit of sufficient notice to ensure the presence of many representatives of the weekly and small daily press, and the attendance was, therefore, but little more than 100. But what the meeting lacked in numbers was made up for by the fact that it was thoroughly representative of the press of every section of Canada.

J. F. MacKay, Toronto *Globe*, president of Canadian Press, Limited, and John R. Bone, Toronto *Star*, president of Canadian Press Association, presided jointly over the meeting; and John M. Imrie, secretary of Canadian Press Association acted as secretary.

The Postal Committee of Canadian Press Association presented a report which was read by the secretary, Mr. Imrie. It was as follows:

At the annual convention of the Canadian Press Association held in June, a Postal Committee was appointed to consider what changes, if any, should be made in the postal regulations in so far as they relate to second-class matter. This Committee invited suggestions from the members as to what changes were desired, many of which were received. Your committee arranged

to meet in Ottawa on Friday of this week, to discuss these suggestions?) for an interview with Postmaster-General on Saturday or 23. But in the meantime the Post Office Department issued a general circular intimating that an adjustment of rates on second-class matter was under consideration, and the latter question of a possible general readjustment of postal rates naturally came before your committee. This question overshadowed to such an extent the other considerations that were in the mind of the Association when the committee was appointed, that it was thought desirable to call a special general meeting of the Association.

Your committee would recommend that in addition to its membership be made by the appointment of 3 members representing papers west of Great Lakes and 2 members representing newspapers in Maritime Provinces for the purpose of meeting the Honourable the Postmaster-General on Saturday.

Your committee at this stage is not prepared to make any recommendations as to what the attitude of the Association in connection with a possible readjustment of rates should be, but would suggest that discussion would be beneficial along certain specific lines:

1. What should be the attitude of this Association with reference to any increase in present rates?

2. In the event of a readjustment of rates being proposed by the Post Office Department, what circumstances should govern the action of the Post Office Department on the following points:

(a) Should the free zone for weekly newspapers be continued?

(b) Should postage rates be based upon the proportion of advertising to reading matter?

(c) Should postage rates be based upon the number of pages or weight of the individual copy of a newspaper?

(d) Should postage rates be based upon the subscription rate charged either with relation to the rate charged in place of publication or with relation to cost of white paper and ink?

(e) Should postage rates for daily newspapers be based on zone system—that is, a smaller charge in a zone of short radius and a higher charge outside of the radius.

In addition to the larger questions outlined above, recommendations on changes in the postal regulations have been made to your committee, and these are embodied in the attached report.

It was decided to proceed at once to the discussion of the more important question of the reported increase in rates of postage on second-class matter and as this discussion was prolonged no action regarding suggested changes in the postal regulations was taken. Indeed the appendix to the Postal Committee's report containing these suggestions was not read to the meeting.

Many members of Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited, expressed opinions on the various questions on which discussion had been invited by the Postal Committee of Canadian Press Association. Some cited figures showing the effect on their newspapers of the imposition of various rates of postage and methods of charging which it was reported in different quarters the Post Office Department has under consideration. These reports and figures emphasized the importance of prompt and united action to safeguard the interests of the members of both organizations; and of accurate and definite information on which such action could be based. The consensus of opinion was that before the Post Office Department made any change in the rates of postage on second-class matter, or in the method of charging for its transmission through the mails, its officials should conduct a searching investigation into the cost of handling this class of mail matter and submit conclusive evidence that even after full allowance for the special consideration to which newspapers are admittedly entitled, the present rate is too low.

It was the opinion of the meeting that a similar investigation should be conducted by the newspapers also. The Post Office Department would present definite facts and figures in support of its contentions and it is important that the newspapers also should secure all available data in support of their case. So it was moved by H. B. Donly, *Sussex Reformer*; seconded by A. E. Miller, *London Free Press*, and carried that the presidents of Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited, committee to engage an expert or experts to conduct a thorough investigation into the cost of carrying second-class matter; such expert or experts to report the result of their investigation to this committee, which shall transmit it to the members of Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited.

The action of the Postal Committee of Canadian Press Association in arranging for an interview with the Postmaster-General was endorsed. The meeting approved of the suggestion in the report of this committee that the question of the reported re-

adjustment of rates rather than the suggested amendments to the postal regulations be the subject of this interview. It was decided to make the deputation more thoroughly representative of the various interests represented in Canadian Press Association by making its personnel as follows:—

The Postal Committee of Canadian Press Association, consisting of John R. Bone, Toronto *Star* (President of C.P.A.); W. J. Taylor, Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* (chairman of committee); W. M. Southam, Ottawa *Citizen*; H. B. Donly, Simcoe *Reformer*; Wm. Findlay, Ottawa *Free Press*; and H. A. Robert, *La Presse*, Montreal.

Representatives of Canadian Press, Limited: J. P. McConnell, Vancouver *Sun*; J. H. Wells, Calgary *Herald*; W. A. Buchanan, Lethbridge *Herald*; P. D. Ross, Ottawa *Journal*; E. F. Slack, Montreal *Gazette*; and Senator Wm. Dennis, Halifax *Herald*.

Representative of agricultural press; John Weld, *Farmer's Advocate*, London.

Representative of weekly press (in addition to Mr. Donly); W. F. Smallfield, Renfrew *Mercury*.

Representative of religious press: Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, Presbyterian Publications, Toronto.

Representative of trade press: Col. J. B. Maclean, Maclean Publishing Co., Limited, Toronto.

Representative of class press: John A. Cooper, *Canadian Courier*, Toronto.

This deputation was instructed to ask the Postmaster-General for information regarding his reported intention to re-adjust the rates of postage on second-class matter; and to request that the expert representing the newspapers be allowed to work with the department in an investigation of the cost of handling second-class matter.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Among those present at the joint meeting of Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited, were the following:

J. E. Atkinson, Toronto *Star*; J. S. Brierley, Montreal *Herald*; W. A. Buchanan, Lethbridge *Herald*; John R. Bone, Toronto *Star*; E. B. Biggar, Pulp and Paper Magazine, Toronto; John Craig, Sturgeon Falls Advertiser; John A. Cooper, Canadian Courier, Toronto; W. A. Craik, Printer and Publisher, Toronto; J. H. Cran-

ston, Toronto Star; H. B. Don y, Slucoe Reformer; Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, Presbyterian Publications Toronto; W. J. Douglas, Toronto Mail and Empire; L. H. Dible, Sun, St. Thomas Times; Wm. Fladlay, Ottawa Free Press; C. Gordansmith, Montreal Witness; W. R. Givens, Kingston Standard; L. A. Guild, Kingston Whig; R. H. Harris, Hamilton Herald; E. A. Harris, Hurlington Gazette; John M. Imrie, Printer & Publisher, Toronto; James H. Imrie, Printer and Publisher, Toronto; W. F. Kerr, Regina Leader; C. O. Knowles, Canadian Press, Ltd., Toronto; John Lewis, Jr., Montreal Star; E. A. Miller, London Free Press; W. J. McNair, Hamilton Herald; J. P. McConnell, Vancouver Sun; E. H. Macklin, Winnipeg Press; E. W. McCready, St. John Telegraph; J. F. MacLennan, Toronto Globe; D. O. McKinnon, Commercial Press, Toronto; J. B. MacLean, MacLean Pub. Co., Toronto; W. M. O'Brien, Stratford Beacon; C. T. Pearce, Toronto News; R. F. Parklason, Ottawa Journal; Norman Phelps, North Bay; P. D. Ross, Ottawa Journal; M. Rossie, London Advertiser; J. Ross Robertson, Toronto Telegram; John R. Robison, Toronto Telegram; W. G. Rook, Canadian Home Journal, Toronto; Rev. J. J. Redditt, Methodist Publications, Toronto; W. G. Robertson, Westminster, Toronto; W. M. Southam, Ottawa Citizen; E. F. Slack, Montreal Gazette; J. R. Stratton, Peterboro Express; W. J. Taylor, Woodstock Sentinel-Review; J. H. Wood, Calgary Herald; McKenzie Wright, Alisa Craig Banner; W. Wright, Commercial Press, Toronto; John Weld, Farmers' Advocate, London; C. L. Wilson, Wilson Pub. Co., Toronto.

Proceedings of Meeting of Deputation Appointed at Joint Meeting

BEFORE meeting the Postmaster-General the deputation held a conference in the Board of Trade rooms, Ottawa.

W. J. Taylor, chairman of the Postal Committee of Canadian Press Association, presided, and John M. Imrie, secretary of Canadian Press Association, acted as secretary of the meeting.

Mr. Imrie presented a brief statement of the history of legislation relating to second-class matter. He said prior to Confederation, newspapers were carried free in what was then known as the lower provinces. After Confederation the rate of one cent a pound was put into effect, and this continued until 1882, when it was abolished, and newspapers were carried free except in the place of publication. This arrangement continued until June 13, 1898, when Sir Wm. Mulock's bill to amend the Post

Office Act was passed. By virtue of this amendment second-class matter, addressed to subscribers resident elsewhere than in the place of publication was carried at a rate of one-quarter of a cent a pound for the period from January 1, 1899, to June 30, 1899; and a half a cent a pound thereafter. An exception was made in the case of weekly newspapers which were given a free zone with a radius of 20 miles and a diameter of 40 miles. The Postal Act was again amended on August 13, 1903, when the rate of one-half of a cent a pound was reduced to one-quarter of a cent a pound on distances not exceeding 300 miles. The limitation of distance was afterwards removed and the free zone on weekly newspapers was extended being given a radius of 40 miles and a diameter of 80 miles.

Mr. Imrie outlined briefly the reasons assigned by Sir Wm. Mulock for reimposing postage on newspapers in 1898, as follows:

(1). The abuse of the system of free transmission in many respects including the demand for free transmission of many new publications, the bona fides as newspapers of which were questionable.

In this connection Sir William Mulock said:

I propose to refer briefly to the objects of some of these papers that are now being transmitted free through the post office. I do not know whether these characteristics that I am about to read describe all the newspapers and all their objects, but they are prepared by one of the officers of the department under the instructions to go through the newspapers, and give me a summary that I might make use of, and which would fairly represent the general character of the papers that are now being carried free. The first that I find upon the list are papers that are engaged in advertising, chiefly for the promotion of the liquor trade and hotel business. . . . I find here papers whose general object is the promotion of temperance, and publications on behalf of Sunday. . . . The next class I have here are periodicals devoted to the interests of Sunday Schools. Then we have papers promoting the sale of books, badges, medals, etc. Next is a paper called "Secular Thought"—papers of that class, some of them relating to works of agnosticism.—Hansard, 1898—pages 5528, 5529.

(2). The increase in weight of newspapers carried free. Their weight was as follows:

In 1889	9,428,498	pounds
In 1891	11,108,835	pounds
..	Increase in 2 years	of 17%.
In 1897	16,557,490	pounds
	Increase in 8 years	of 77%.

(3). The demands of the railways for increased subsidies for carrying the mails.

(4). The deficit of \$800,000 in Post Office Department during 1896; and of \$580,000 during 1897.

(5). The need of additional revenue to offset possible loss through reduction of rate on letters from 3 to 2 cents.

Whilst most, if not all, of these reasons are given specifically by Sir Wm. Mulock in other statements, they are summed up generally in this short statement, which he made in the course of the debate on the second reading of his bill on May 13, 1898:

I submit that the two measures (the reduction on letters and the charge on newspapers) are in the public interest. They are entwined together, and whilst the imposition of the rate upon newspapers will not pay the whole cost of this boon that will be conferred upon the public, yet to the extent that it produces a revenue, it will add to that amount, and it will be, I trust, a check upon the hurdens that are cast upon the people to-day by the bringing out of newspapers of a useless kind—fake newspapers some call them. I would not use the term, I do not know the meaning of it. A constant demand is made upon the public to carry newspapers that succeed in getting registration, comply with the requirements of a newspaper set forth in the statutes, but which are nothing but agencies in disguise to promote private enterprise and private gain. Putting the matter on a business basis will, I trust, help to ward off some of these evils and make it possible for the country in the near future to have the advantage of the 2 cent rate without any extra cost.—Hansard, 1898—pages 5532, 5533.

Mr. Imrie quoted several extracts from Hansard in connection with the debate on Sir Wm. Mulock's bill, among them the following:

Referring to the figures showing tonnage of newspapers carried in 1889, 1891 and 1897 respectively, quoted by Sir Wm. Mulock in House of Commons on April 1, 1898, the leader of the opposition, Sir Charles Tupper, said: "I would draw the attention of my honorable friend (Sir Wm. Mulock) at the outset to a conclusion at which I have arrived from the enormously rapid increase in the number of newspapers carried through the mails.

How does the honorable gentleman account for that? I attribute it, sir, to the anxiety of the great mass of the people of this country to obtain information. I regard the publication of newspapers as one of the most potent educational influences that the country possesses. I believe that the fact that Canada can boast to-day of having a better informed population among all classes throughout the country than almost any other country throughout the world is attributable largely to the eagerness with which they look for the information which can only be conveyed to the great mass of the people through newspapers. I do not want to prejudice this question before we come to consider it on its merits; but I want at the outset to throw out for the consideration of the Government that the fact of the enormous increase in the circulation of the newspapers of the country is one of the most potent reasons why the dissemination of knowledge and information in reference to public questions should not be circumscribed by preventing the publication of these newspapers if that would be the natural result."—Hansard, 1898—page 2916, 2917.

Further on in the same speech Sir Charles Tupper said: "What this measure strikes the most potent blow at is the dissemination by the press of the proceedings of this House and the discussions of public affairs."—Hansard, 1898—page 2917.

In the debate on second reading of Sir Wm. Mulock's bill to amend Postal Act, Sir Charles Tupper said on May 13, 1898:—"There is abundant evidence that manhood suffrage in the Dominion is a far higher franchise than manhood suffrage in Great Britain for the reason that there are tens of thousands of electors in the United Kingdom who go to the polls without having the remotest idea not only of public questions before the country, but, if their lives depended upon it, they could not state who is Prime Minister of Great Britain to-day. I give that as an indication of the great advance the people of Canada have made in intelligence; and the thorough knowledge which the mass of the people here have in respect to the political issues and all other questions of that kind, as well as general information, rests largely on the fact that newspapers have so largely increased in circulation until they are now read by almost every individual in the country, and there is scarcely a family to be found that has not the advantage of receiving a newspaper in some form or other. Looking upon that as a great means of education in the country and for the dissemination of the most valuable information, I do not concur with the Honorable Postmaster-General in the opinion that it is a wise act to impose any obstruction to that great means of disseminating popular information which is furnished by and must depend upon the newspaper press of the country."

In the same debate, and on the same date, Sir Charles Tupper said:—"If the post office revenue admitted of a reduction of the charges upon parties who mail letters of \$650,000 a year (the estimated loss of revenue through reduction of rate on letters from 3 cents to 2 cents), I think it could very well bear the amount proposed to be gained by the charge of \$62,000 a year upon newspapers. I stated before that I regard the free circulation of newspapers throughout the masses of very great importance to the country. I regard the newspaper literature of this country

as of the greatest possible value to the people. I do not suppose there is any country in the world where newspapers are more widely taken and read than in Canada. I may be wrong on this point, but my impression is that the statistics which the Postmaster-General has given to the House abundantly prove the great value the people of the Dominion attach to their newspapers, and the rapid increase of the weight of newspapers carried by the Post Office Department affords the best possible evidence of the desire of the mass of the people to obtain newspapers. It is not merely a question of the small amount of charge on newspapers, but the fact that the people receive newspapers free of postage is one which has a most material influence in regard to popular subscriptions to them. People will subscribe to newspapers to secure information for themselves, and their families, when the newspapers have free postage, when with the smallest possible charge imposed they would not do so, because such would be attended with inconvenience and expense."—Hansard, 1898,—page 5542.

In the debate on this bill—Mr. Taylor said: "I understand the Honorable the Postmaster-General to say that he proposed this bill to reduce the postage on letters from 3 cents to 2 cents, and he hoped to increase the revenue by charging postage upon newspapers. Now looking at it from the farmer's point of view, I think it is very objectionable, and I hope the Honorable gentleman will see fit to withdraw his bill here and now for this reason. Ninety per cent. of the letters that pass through the mails are written by manufacturers and business men; the average farmer does not send probably more than 4 letters a year and the saving to him would be probably about 4 cents. But 90 per cent. of the newspapers are supplied to the farmers of this country, so that for the 4 cents he will save on his letters, he will pay an additional 25 cents on his daily or weekly newspaper. It looks to me like another blow at the farmer."—Hansard 1898—page 2923.

In moving on May 13, 1898, the second reading of Bill 110, to amend the Postal Act, and with particular reference to the clause reducing the rate on letters from 3 cents to 2 cents, Sir Wm. Mulock the then Postmaster-General said in part: "Public opinion favors the cheapest and freest possible communication by mail throughout all parts of the country; and I feel sure that no argument is necessary to commend such a proposition to the public favor."—Hansard, 1898—page 5521.

On May 13, 1898, in the debate on the second reading, Sir Wm. Mulock's bill, he said in reply to an enquiry about the deficit in the United States Post Office Department during the previous year: "I think it was \$12,000,000, but I do not think that any person who is familiar with the working of the United States system attributes that at all to the letter rate. It is attributable by those who know,—Mr. Loud for instance, one of the greatest authorities in United States—to the extravagance of the Government in connection with their railway mail service. The railway companies of the United States are charging the Government, I think, 6 times as much for carrying the mails as are charged for ordinary first-class express matter."—Hansard, 1898,—page 5525.

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In the debate on May 17, 1898, Mr. McDougall said:—"The imposition of a tax on newspapers means the imposition of a tax on knowledge. Many who now receive newspapers cannot continue to receive them because the publisher must charge this tax upon the newspapers he distributes and so increase the price to the subscribers."—Hansard, 1898, page 5717.

Mr. Imrie gave other information relating to the income derived by the Post Office Department from the carriage of second-class matter; the expense of publishing newspapers in Canada as compared with United States and Great Britain; their value for educational purposes, in the developing of local communities, in advertising Canada, etc.

P. D. Ross, *Ottawa Journal*, said the Post Office Department should be required to show good cause for any contemplated increase in the rate on second-class matter. He referred to the statement of the Post Office Department that the railways had demanded increased subsidies for carrying second-class matter and said definite proof of the cost to the railways of carrying this matter should be furnished. The expert whose appointment was authorized at the joint meeting in Toronto, on 20th inst., should be allowed to co-operate with the Post Office Department in a thorough investigation into this and other questions affecting the rate that might properly be charged newspapers.

It was moved by John A. Cooper, *Canadian Courier*, Toronto, seconded by E. F. Slack, *Montreal Gazette*, and carried that P. D. Ross be the spokesman of the deputation and present its wishes and feelings on this matter.

The whole question of the purpose of the interview and of the position of the newspapers on this matter was then discussed. This discussion showed a consensus of opinion on the following, among other points:

The proper attitude of the newspapers toward the Post Office Department and of the Post Office Department toward the newspapers is one of co-operation in an effort to discover the real cost of handling second-class matter.

The demands of the railways for increased subsidies for carrying the mails should be thoroughly investigated; and the newspapers should not suffer through accession to demands from this quarter that are unreasonable.

The newspapers generally should not be made to suffer through the increased cost to the Post Office Department of rural mail delivery or other improvements serving special interests.

The Post Office Department should give adequate consideration to the following, among other points:—

(a) The position of the newspapers as a factor in the diffusion of knowledge; and in the educational system of the country.

(b) The fact that without the newspapers the Government would be put to enormous expense in keeping the electorate and general public in touch with public issues and proceedings at Ottawa.

(c) The fact that because of the tremendously heavy expense of publishing a newspaper the business is not on the whole a profitable one, as is evinced by the condition of most of the small newspapers and many of the large ones; and by the fact that when the large daily newspapers represented in Canadian Associated Press decided to supplement their news service by a special service from Great Britain they had to secure a large subsidy from the Government to enable them to do so.

(d) The fact that much of the work, such as sorting, that is done by the Post Office Department in connection with other classes of mail matter is done by the newspapers in connection with second-class matter.

Because of the above and other considerations the case for a low postage rate on newspapers is exceedingly strong.

Before any change in the rate of postage on second-class matter is made the Post Office Department should be required to submit conclusive evidence that the cost of handling second-class matter is such that despite the above and other arguments in favor of a low postage rate on newspapers, the present rate is too low.

J. H. Woods, *Calgary Herald*, suggested the appointment of certain members of the deputation to act as spokesmen for the various interests represented in it provided any questions concerning these interests were asked by the Postmaster-General.

It was moved by John A. Cooper, seconded by W. M. Southern, and carried, that W. J. Taylor, *Woodstock Sentinel-Review*, represent the small dailies; H. B. [unclear], *Simcoe Reformer*, the weekly newspapers; Col. J. B. Maclean, the trade and class publications; J. H. Woods, *Calgary Herald*, the press of Western Canada; and Senator Wm. Dennis, *Halifax Herald*, the press of the Maritime Provinces.

The deputation then adjourned to the Parliament Buildings to meet the Honorable the Postmaster-General.

Report of Interview with the Honorable, the Postmaster General

THAT the Post Office Department is seriously considering an increase in the rate of postage on second-class matter was made very clear during the interview which the deputation representing Canadian Press Association and Canadian Press, Limited, had with the Honorable, the Postmaster-General, L. P. Pelletier, on Saturday, November 23.

As Mr. Pelletier himself said, the deputation that waited on him was a most representative and influential one, for it consisted of the following:—John R. Bone, *Toronto Star*; W. J. Taylor, *Woodstock Sentinel-Review*; W. M. Southam, *Ottawa Citizen*; H. B. Donly, *Simcoe Reformer*; Wm. Findlay, *Ottawa Free Press*; H. A. Robert, *La Presse*, Montreal; J. H. Woods, *Calgary Herald*; P. D. Ross, *Ottawa Journal*; E. F. Slaek, *Montreal Gazette*; Senator Wm. Dennis, *Halifax Herald*; John Weld, *Farm 's Advocate*, London; W. E. Smallfield, *Renfrew Mercury*; Col. J. B. Maclean, *Maclean Publishing Co., Ltd.*, Toronto; John A. Cooper, *Canadian Courier*, Toronto; Senator Robert Jaffray, *Toronto Globe*; J. E. Atkinson, *Toronto Star*; Senator Coffee and L. Burns, *Catholic Record*, London; H. T. Hunter, *Maclean Publishing Co., Limited*, Toronto; E. Norman Smith, *Ottawa Free Press*; R. F. Parkinson, *Ottawa Journal*; and J. J. Reditt, *Methodist Publications*, Toronto.

Mr. Ross said the Postmaster-General might observe that the deputation represented the important press interests of Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The publishers of newspapers and other periodicals had received an impression from a recent circular issued by the Dominion Post Office Department that important changes were contemplated in the postal regulations. The postal regulations were a matter of vital consequence to the newspaper associations and consequently at recent meetings of the two great newspaper associations of Canada the matter had come up for discussion. But as no definite

information was before the members as to what was contemplated by the Department the meetings were unable to discuss the matter with any satisfaction, and it was accordingly resolved to ask the Postmaster-General to kindly meet a deputation from the associations. The present large deputation was therefore before the Postmaster-General with a twofold purpose. First, to ascertain what the frame of mind of the Post Office Department was, and secondly, to offer their co-operation in any possible way regarding whatever information could be furnished by the newspapers for the Minister's consideration.

MR. PELLETIER'S REPLY.

The Postmaster-General, Hon. L. P. Pelletier, expressed his pleasure at receiving so representative a deputation and said the Post Office Department had not made up its mind regarding any policy on this matter. The department has in mind the need of going into this question very fully. Mr. Pelletier said he had been told there was some unrest among newspapers regarding this policy, but this is not necessary.

"I may say, gentlemen," he said, "that there is no occasion for that. Anything that I may do here, with the help of my Deputy Minister, Dr. Coulter, will be done after full consultation with, and the advice of, the newspapers. We have, the doctor and I, put our heads together in order to prepare a circular which we thought would give us some of the preliminary—and I underline the word 'preliminary'—information which we think ought to be in the hands of the Department, so that we may go further into this matter. This circular has no other bearing than that. I have been a journalist myself and I believe in newspapers and I think they are a power in the land which we have to reckon with in the first place, and which, in the second place, ought to be well treated. We believe here that we are confronted with a serious situation. We may be right or wrong. It will be matter for very complete and full discussion with you gentlemen—discussion as full as possible. I am glad to see, as Mr. Ross has said, that I have the pleasure to-day of having such

a representative gathering of journalists from all over the country nearly, and some of the most important ones and some of the pioneers of advance and progress in journalism in this country.

"We are confronted just now with the following position and I want to put it straight before you because it is the starting point. We have had an arrangement with the railway companies in Canada which has been in existence for years, which never was modified and under which, or in virtue of which, these railway companies take care of the transportation of the mail matter of this country. Like our predecessors, we have been hammered at by the railway companies with the representation that, whilst the amount of mail matter which they are carrying for us has increased immensely, the price or remuneration given for such transportation has not been adequate. Now you journalists are all business men, and you will understand me when I say that, without pledging ourselves at all in this matter and without acknowledging that their contention is right or wrong, I think I am bound to go as far as saying that there may be something in it. I think that is putting it very mildly. They tell us the amount of mail matter they used to carry was very little in comparison with what they are called upon to carry now. Under present conditions they are carrying tons and tons of mail matter over and above the amount which they were called upon to carry before, and they say, 'We are asked to do that for the same price and no consideration is given to our demands.'

"The late government adopted a certain line of policy in that respect and I think it is the right thing to tell you. These demands have been made to this Department for a number of years and they have been avoided and side-tracked, and put to one side as much as possible. Finally, the late government, finding that they were cornered I suppose, thought they had discovered a way out of the difficulty by having an order-in-council passed by virtue of which the whole matter was referred to the Railroad Board for them to decide what should in future be the remuneration which the Post Office Depart-

ment would give to the railway companies. When I arrived in this Department, one of the first things brought to my attention was this very important matter. After looking at the facts and papers before me, I thought the Post Office Department had very skilfully avoided a difficulty and washed its hands entirely of it by leaving it for somebody else to decide. Whilst that is very good, very skillful, my principle has always been to face a difficulty myself and try to solve it without shirking it, no matter what the consequences. I thought this Order-in-Council which brought a temporary solution of the question did not have the result of bridging the difficulty at all. In the first place we submitted the matter to the Department of Justice and we were told it was very doubtful whether the Railway Board had any power to decide such questions. As a lawyer, I agreed with that opinion myself. Moreover, I saw that the decision of the Railway Board, which would be final, as between the Government and the railway companies might perhaps cripple the Department's finances to such an extent that we would not know how to keep our heads above water. Finally, there is power in our own hands given to us by the law to fix ourselves the rates which shall be paid to the railway companies for the transportation of mail matter. True, we are told it is a very arbitrary law, and I am prepared to admit that it is arbitrary, but if we were to look into the whole situation it might be justified. I thought if the Post Office Department had power in its own hands to decide the question that is was no use referring it to the Railway Board. I therefore, had another Order-in-Council drafted and passed withdrawing the question from the Railway Board, and I told the railway companies, who seemed to be somewhat dissatisfied about the move, that I would face the difficulty myself and try and settle it in a business-like way and not shirk it. I may say that I have not done much yet, owing to my trip to England and the necessity of preparing for the session of Parliament. It seems to me that the increase in the amount of mail matter carried is undeniable. Newspapers have increased in importance, volume and

shape and the newspapers of this country have very much improved. But, is it a fact or not that we are carrying now for the newspapers a very much larger amount of mail matter than we used to? This, I think, will not be gainsaid. Is it not fair that you and I should sit down and take up this question and try and come to some conclusion which will not hurt the future of this, which I may call national enterprise? And at the same time we must remember that we have in all the civilized countries of the world now, except Canada, a newspaper rate of 1c. per pound. And in Canada, which at the present moment thinks that it is becoming a nation, perhaps we might think that we ought to follow other countries in the rates of transportation for newspapers. In this country we ask only one-fourth of a cent per pound. I am sure you will agree that is modest and reasonable, but I am not going to ask for an answer now. But I do wish to improve conditions in that respect, and what I am absolutely in earnest about and desirous of doing is to do it in such a way that the newspapers, when we have closed this matter, will say that we have met them in a fair spirit and with the sincere desire of doing what is right by the press. I shall be very glad to have all the information and suggestions which you may be able to give me to meet as much as possible the requirements which I have tried to put before you."

THE NEWSPAPER POSITION.

Mr. Ross said he was sure the deputation appreciated very greatly the full and frank statement of the Postmaster-General, and the evident friendly spirit towards the newspapers which animated his remarks.

He might say on behalf of the deputation that the newspaper associations realized that the Postal Department was not likely to be anxious of its own accord to alter present conditions materially unless under pressure from some source complaining that the existing conditions were burdensome, and Mr. Pelletier's reply had indicated that the pressure came from the railways. Mr. Ross thought himself free

to say on behalf of the newspaper interests that they were decidedly suspicious of railway representations in such a matter. So far as the newspapers knew, no expert effort had ever been made in Canada to ascertain exactly what the cost of railway mail carriage was to the railways. The newspapers desired that no undue weight would be attached to any railway representations until a comprehensive and accurate investigation of the conditions had been made by the Government. For one reason alone the newspapers had a right to be suspicious of railway statements regarding the carriage of mail, viz.: that when as a result of railway complaints the United States Government had announced a heavy increase in newspaper postage, a thorough investigation of the conditions by experts proved that the railways had grossly overstated the cost, and as a result the United States Government withdrew its original proposition. He might add that this phase of the matter had come up at the meetings of the Press Associations, and as a result it was found that the members were prepared to appoint an expert or experts at their own expense to examine and report on the conditions. The newspaper interests hoped that if such a step became necessary, such expert or experts would be given every facility to profit by any investigation which the Post Office Department might inaugurate, and to aid in the full examination of the conditions and costs of railway mail carriage and all other phases of the matter.

"There can be nothing fairer than that," said Mr. Pelletier, "I agree to it at once. We shall be glad to have your co-operation and to work with your committee."

Mr. Ross said: "I am sure we are all gratified to hear that. But I do not know that I am authorized to go so far as to characterize it as co-operation nor have we appointed any committee for that purpose. At the meeting of the Associations which we represent no action was taken further than authorizing expenses if necessary. No committee was appointed to deal with the matter, as we were expected to report back. But of course we appreciate very much your willingness to give us every facility."

Mr. Pelletier said that the Department desired their co-operation and wished to have a committee of the Associations acting.

THE NATIONAL ASPECT.

Mr. Ross: "We will report that, and I think there is only one other consideration which ought to be mentioned on behalf of the newspapers. While we hold that a thorough examination should be made of the conditions and costs of railway mail carriage and other considerations before postal changes are considered by the Department we realize that it is possible that the result of the investigation might really show some postal loss due to the carriage of newspapers and other periodicals at the quarter-cent a pound rate. Yet, and we wish to emphasize that, cost has never been considered the deciding factor. Great weight has always been given what might be called the national educational side of the question. The principle has been accepted in Canada that it is of national importance to have as wide dissemination as possible of newspapers and other periodicals and their information, and we would accordingly express the hope that whenever consideration of changes in postal regulations come up, this feature should be given full importance. It might be arguable that even if the quarter-cent a pound rate does not meet the cost of railway mail carriage there may nevertheless be no sufficient cause for action by the Department as regards postal rates."

"As to the national aspect," said Mr. Pelletier, I think you are right, to a certain extent at least. If I were to ask the rate the railway companies present to us it would put you out of business, but this Department is willing to carry its fair share of any such increase so as to meet you half-way and try and work together in order to try and get the best results we can, and just for the very reason you mention, the national aspect. There is one point, it is the amount of the Saturday paper. I think anyone who reads papers in this country, and nobody is a more careful and attentive newspaper reader than myself, newspapers of all sides of party

politics, has remarked on the growth in size of the Saturday papers. When I take up my Saturday papers, I feel always that it is necessary for me to have had a good breakfast in the morning. I don't want to be interpreted as criticising this thing, but it is a fact that the volume of the Saturday papers has grown considerably and although they are attractive and well made they are physically heavy on mails. Organize your committee and let us go into this matter. Let us join hands and we will work this thing together. I again insist this is not a matter of riding over publishings—we will not do anything except we are able to satisfy you on points of difference. Of course, there must be some give and take, but this being the case we will reach happy conclusions."

Mr. Ross again thanked Mr. Pelletier for his frank statement and said the newspapers had not yet appointed a committee to look into this matter, but merely this deputation to secure information. But the newspapers would certainly like to have an expert co-operate with Post Office Department if it is the case that the Department intends to take any action.

"SOMETHING MUST BE DONE."

"You had better take it for granted," said Mr. Pelletier. "that something must be done." Your plan is a good one."

The deputation then withdrew and adjourned to the Rideau Club where the Ottawa publishers were hosts at luncheon.

After luncheon an informal discussion on the statements made in the interview took place.

This discussion revealed a unanimity of opinion that although it is vitally important that the expert employed to represent the newspapers secure all the facts affecting the cost of handling second-class matter, he should work with, rather than against, the Post Office Department and not antagonize it. For this and other reasons it was the feeling that the expert should be a Canadian, although he should be, or should put himself, in close touch with the various experts and commissions which have conducted

similar investigations in other countries, and with those who have investigated transportation charges in this country. The expert should have an intimate acquaintance with local conditions, tact and diplomacy, which qualities are as essential as the possession of technical information.

It was suggested that all suggestions in connection with the investigation be made through the office of Canadian Press Association where they would receive the careful attention of the secretary, and be passed on to the proper committee or individual member.

Several suggested that steps be taken to secure the co-operation on this matter of newspapers not represented in the membership of Canadian Press Association. Mr. Imrie explained that since the meeting in Toronto on Wednesday, a circular letter had been sent to the 600 newspapers in Canada that are members of Canadian Press Association asking them to contribute specified amounts according to class, to the fund that was being raised for the purpose of conducting this investigation. Another circular letter had been sent to other daily and weekly newspapers in Eastern Canada which are not represented in the membership of the Canadian Press Association, acquainting them with what had been decided upon and putting it up to them strongly to give their moral and financial support in this matter by joining Canadian Press Association at once. The secretaries of the Alberta and Eastern British Columbia and Western Canada Press Associations which are affiliated with Canadian Press Association are being asked to send a similar circular letter to all newspapers in Western Canada which are not represented in their membership.

