

Let 'Em Put Me In Jail: Private Postie

Bruce Lobay, a 22-year-old Winnipeg man who found out Thursday he couldn't legally compete against the Canadian post office, says he'll continue to operate anyhow.

"It's an infringement on my rights as a Canadian," he said Friday after being informed that the post office has a monopoly on mail delivery in Canada. "I was doing something beneficial for the people and was hurting no one."

Three weeks ago, Mr. Lobay set up his own postal service in East Kildonan. Using a motorcycle to make

his rounds, he guaranteed customers same-day local delivery for seven cents a letter, one cent cheaper than the post office rate.

His activities were explained in a weekly newspaper, and post office officials promptly informed him of the Post Office Act, which gives the postmaster-general a monopoly on letter mail.

Anyone breaking the law is subject to a fine not exceeding \$100 for every day he remains in business, two months imprisonment, or both.

"I was unemployed for three months, and the unemployment people couldn't even find me a lead. I wasn't collecting unemployment (benefits), so I finally told them, 'Fine, leave me alone and I'll find my own job.'

"I needed the money . . . I didn't want to sit around and grow a beard. I just wanted to work.

"But now that I've finally got myself a job, they won't let me do it. What am I supposed to do, go on welfare?"

He said he would continue delivering the mail. "Let them put me in jail."

Mr. Lobay explained his service was only for the summer and would last only "another month or so. In September most of the students go back to school and then I'll seriously look for a job."

He said he will deliver third-class mail — which is legal — and also letters if asked to do so.

A former chemistry student at Red River Community College, Mr. Lobay worked on a winter works

job at the University of Manitoba which ended in early June.

"I knew that job would end in June so I started making plans on what I would do afterwards. I organized this delivery service and got it going.

"I get about 170 miles to the gallon on my scooter, and on a good day I can make \$35."

And besides, he said "everyone loves the service and they're not too happy with the post office service."

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