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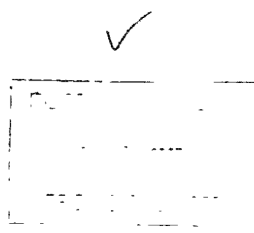
From: SIMON BURNS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

David Mills Esq
Chief Executive
Post Office Ltd
80 Old Street
London EC1V 9HQ

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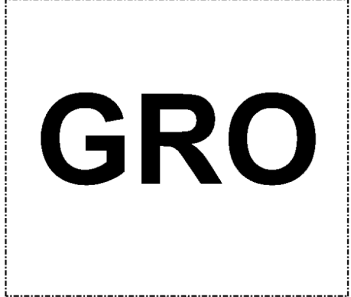
21 November 2005

Dear Mr Mills

I am writing to you on behalf of a constituent of mine, Mr A Bajaj of [GRO] [GRO], who runs the sub post office in Clematis Tye in Chelmsford. I am also enclosing a letter that Mr Bajaj sent to Elaine Ridge on 14th September which, broadly, explains the problem that he came to discuss with me.

Mr Bajaj, who is personally known to me, and who I believe is 100% honest and trustworthy, swears that the reason for the shortages in money is due to a computer software error. I would be grateful if your office could look into this matter and try and get to the bottom of it so that it can be amicably resolved, because it would be a terrible thing if it was a computer error that was causing the problem that is leading to so many discrepancies.

I look forward to hearing from you.



#21 September

WORKING FOR WEST CHELMSFORD
Website: www.westchelmsford.gov.uk

FAD 14. 114. 9.

Without Prejudice

To

Elaine Ridge
Area Performance Manager
P.O. Ltd., 1-King Street, Maidstone,
Kent. ME14BP.

Dated 21st.Nov.,2005.

Madam,

In continuation of my letters of 31st.of July, 5th Aug. 18th Aug. 7th Sept. and 14th.Sept.2005, I regret to state that nothing has been done to check the software, to my knowledge so far. Though I resigned in frustration and took it back, after talking to Mandy Lawless, to continue providing service to the community, till the post-office was sold or some other arrangements could be made to run this branch from this very premises. The computer was restarted from zero, after payment by cheque without prejudice amounting to £3000.00, shown as shortage on the computer because of the defective horizon soft-ware and not of any human error. Throughout the next trading period each evening, at the end of the day, the computer showed always little plus and not a penny minus. But after first monthly balancing, last week, it showed cash all right but the stamps about £300.00 adrift. On 17th Nov., at the close of the day, the computer showed £2555.91 short. Everything was rechecked for this sudden shortage but nothing could be found. Help-line was contacted at 5.45p.m. and Jenny told me that she would get it checked and will ring-back in the morning. Efforts were made to contact Mandy Lawless on her mobile between 6p.m. and 7.30 p.m. but her phone was not on. Nothing has been heard from the help-line. All the weekly and daily records have been kept in separate envelopes for the last 4 months so that these can be checked by any one any time. Since this is the 4th time the same problem has occurred so I again urge you to get the horizon soft-ware duly checked. To have such huge shortages without any cogent reasons, excepting the defective software, is totally unimaginable and baffling. Previously, the post-office had been paid by us in the hope that it would find the necessary errors, since it takes about 14 weeks for the post-office to check an account for the current date and is always behind by that time. If no errors are found then where the figures are altered, obviously at your end. We had this post-office for almost 16 years. The staff with us have been for ¾ years and never such a situation had arisen. I hope you would appreciate that it is humanly and financially impossible to carry on under this uncalled for strain and condition. After publication of our plight in the "SUBPOST-MASTER" over 12 post-masters have come forward who have had similar experience and also the sub-postmasters whose post-offices had been closed because they either refused to re-imburse or could not afford this soft-ware fault luxury. I have paid thrice in the hope that the post-office would eventually find fault where it is and rectify the same. But regret to say that for the last 5 months my efforts had been in vain.

To prove what has been stated in the past and above, I invite you to appoint a post-master, at our cost(out of the monthly salary) say for 3 months or so to check your self the computer hard-ware at this office. And till that period this so-called adrift amount in the suspense account. For your information this post-office is for sale because of

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