

was dissolved, the general elections came on and therefore there was no time to deal with the matter. But it is in no sense true that we had decided, as a government, to abandon the land on Sussex street. On the contrary, I would have expected that a part of it at any rate, would have been utilized for some departmental buildings, while, of course, it would be the part of wisdom to acquire land in some other locality to provide for the very pressing needs of the public service.

One statement with regard to the Langevin Block in answer to the Postmaster General who, I think, tried to unduly press the charge that the late government had been neglectful of the interests of the employees of the Post Office Department. If there is any fault anywhere, it is on the part of those who built the Langevin Block in the first instance. It was constructed by the Conservative government a good many years ago, not by the Liberal government and, instead of acquiring land right through to Sparks street and erecting a building which would have plenty of light and ventilation, for the different public offices, the building was erected on only half the block so that the rear offices are not lighted at all and it is exceedingly difficult to get proper ventilation.

With regard to the congestion, as I said the other day we recognized that trouble and sought to remedy it. Since I have been minister, we have rented a large number of buildings in Ottawa. We have rented commodious premises in the Grand Trunk building for our Railway Commission, splendid accommodation at large expense. We rented the old Y. M. C. A., the Rosenthal building, the Brennan building, the Imperial Realty building and some others, endeavouring, as fast as we could reasonably do so, to give accommodation; but the new buildings had to be erected before we could get the accommodation. I entered into negotiations for the Blackburn building some time ago, and the new Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) is only carrying out to completion the negotiations we entered upon.

I do not like to charge my hon. friend with exaggeration, but I think he is exaggerating when he speaks of the rats being so destructive. I think if that is so, it is the fault of the caretaker. If a building is neglected, rats will accumulate. The Postmaster General (Mr. Pelletier) says rats were so wary because they were born and brought up while the Liberal government was in power. I would rather think that the fact that it was only after the new government came in that they became so vicious and started in to devour the postal notes, shows that they have seen the procession moving towards the

public crib and would like to be in with the crowd, and the only thing they could find was these postal notes and money orders.

Mr. MONK. I merely wish to correct the impression, if it exists, that anything has been absolutely decided as yet about the sites. What I told the committee and what is the fact is that the government has not yet had time or opportunity to fully study this important question. A committee of the Privy Council has been appointed, we are very anxious to get to work and to take up the matter as soon as possible because our accommodation is entirely insufficient and inadequate and every day demonstrates more conclusively that we have no rooms, that the departments are very ill provided with absolutely essential accommodation. We have to continue leasing buildings as has been done in the past and we are extremely anxious, if possible, to put an end to that by commencing the construction of our own departmental building as soon as possible.

Personally I would be very sorry to see the Sussex-street site abandoned. I have only had time to cast my eyes upon the plans of a justice building to include the Justice Department, the Supreme Court, the Exchequer Court and the Railway Commissioners, in fact everything pertaining to justice. That plan has been prepared by one of the most skilful architects. It seems to me it would be possible at any rate to install that part of our departments on the Sussex-street property leaving sufficient space around to give the necessary relief to such a very handsome building. I can assure the committee that as soon as the House has adjourned we will take up the question and try to bring it to a solution as soon as possible.

Mr. LEMIEUX. As some newspapers have sneered at me about the 'ratty' condition of the Langevin Block, and have held me responsible for the congestion there, I wish to vindicate myself once more, and to say that when I took office in the Post Office Department five years ago I found that there were certainly too many people congregated together within those walls. But the Post Office Department occupy only one floor and the cellar for the parcels the Archives and the old files. I immediately called upon the Deputy Minister of Labour, Mr. King.

I was then Postmaster General and Minister of Labour. I urged upon Mr. King to fully consider the question, to study the building from the labour point of view and to prepare a report. I may say that the city of Ottawa had laid a complaint to the Department of Labour. Mr. King