

objection. Public sentiment would probably approve of the policy of the Government in reducing the rate as far as that could possibly be done. But the difficulty is that there is an evasion of the law in this particular regard, that advertising matter which does not come strictly within the term "newspaper" makes use of the privilege of distribution throughout the entire Dominion at the expense of the public exchequer. There is no reason why this matter should not be worked out on a scientific basis if for the purpose of furnishing a public service to those who profit by it, the Government of Canada has to make up a deficit out of the public exchequer. It cannot be justified; it is indefensible.

This is an age of commercialism, an age in which taxation is imposed upon the public for absolutely necessary purposes; and why there should be a reduction in an impost which should be governed entirely by commercial considerations I cannot understand. If it has been wise to impose a sales tax on newsprint, why should an exception be made in regard to the carriage of newspapers that pass through the mails? To strike a blow at an important policy of raising revenue for the purpose of offsetting a small tax that has been placed upon a general commodity is, it seems to me, a policy that is anything but sane, and one that must be subversive of good government.

I appeal to my honourable friend. I say that this is a matter that should not be dealt with at this period of the session; that it should receive every consideration; and that this is peculiarly no time for reducing our revenues and thus bringing about a deficit and a disturbance in our postal conditions.

Hon. Mr. REID: Honourable gentlemen, I wish to raise an objection to this Bill and to other Bills that may come before us at the present time. I think it most unfair that we should be asked to proceed with Bills before they have been distributed to the members of the House. Bills are sent over here and we are asked to put them through, without having been furnished with copies of them. There should at least be a number of copies placed upon the Table of the House so that we might have some idea of what we are discussing. I suppose more Bills will be brought over this afternoon. We cannot know what we are discussing at all until we have the Bills before us. Until we get them I do not think we should proceed.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: The leader of the Opposition knows that every issue of a paper is scrutinized, and that only so many columns

of advertising are allowed to so many columns of reading matter.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: For the purpose of facilitating further discussion of this matter, I intend to ask my honourable friend whether a computation has been made as to the additional revenue to be derived from newspapers by reason of the increase of the sales tax. I understand that the increase is only one and a fraction per cent.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: From $2\frac{1}{4}$ to 6.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: And the sales tax on newsprint is 6 per cent. On a ton of paper that amounts to \$4.50.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: But you have increased your advertising rates and your subscription rates very substantially.

Hon. Mr. FOWLER: Is it not a rule of this House that Bills should be distributed?

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Yes. Would my hon. friend tell me what this reduction in the postal rates will represent?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The figure may have been given in the other House—

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Would my honourable friend let the Bill stand until we get full information? This is an important matter.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will withdraw my motion for the second reading, and will ask that the Bill be put down for second reading at the second sitting.

Hon. Mr. FOWLER: I suggest that the Bill be distributed in the meantime.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: And the question my honourable friend puts is what?

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I want to know what the increase of revenue would be by reason of the sales tax, and what would be the total amount of the reduction in postal rates.

The motion for the second reading was withdrawn.

SALE OF GOVERNMENT SHIPS INQUIRY

On the notice:

By the Honourable Mr. Bennett: That he will call attention to the advertised sale of some twenty old Government ships and inquire if the Government propose to sell the said vessels.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: I would like to ask the leader of the Government whether or not