

*Supply—Agriculture*

during the 22 years he was in the employ of the department he never missed one day.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Chairman, he was summarily dismissed. He was dismissed on 24 hours' notice. I hold in my hand a letter which he received from the regional veterinary director, Dr. G. T. Labelle of the city of Montreal. The letter is dated June 12 from the officer. Mr. Mitchell received it the next day, and it was to the effect that he should not report for work on the following Monday. In other words he was given exactly 24 hours to leave the service. The letter which the regional veterinary director wrote to Mr. Mitchell indicates that it is with deep regret that the doctor has to inform Mr. Mitchell that his services would be at an end.

Before I proceed further I should like to put on the record two letters which were addressed to Dr. P. Labelle, chief veterinarian health and animals disease, Department of Agriculture, Montreal. The first one is from the Cunard Steamship Company, Montreal, and the other is from Furness, Withy and Company of the same city, both dated June 13, the day on which Mr. Mitchell received his letter of dismissal. The first letter from the Cunard Steamship Company reads as follows:

Dear Dr. Labelle:

It is understood Mr. W. P. Mitchell, your inspector, will not be calling at this office in the future. While we appreciate any changes in the personnel is entirely a prerogative to the department, it is with regret that we will not have the pleasure of Mr. Mitchell's services.

For many years now, Mr. Mitchell, has been most co-operative, and a most conscientious worker as far as we are concerned. It is doubtful in our opinion, for what it is worth, that his successor can improve on his duty and devotion in his work.

You may be sure we would like to have Mr. Mitchell continue his visits to this office providing this is acceptable to you and to the department.

Yours faithfully,

The Cunard Steamship Company Limited

The other letter from Furness, Withy & Company Limited reads as follows:

Dr. G. T. Labelle,  
District Veterinarian,  
Montreal.

Dear Sir:

It came to us as quite a shock to learn that Mr. W. P. Mitchell has been laid off as of June 14.

The writer has been dealing with Mr. Mitchell for over 20 years and in all this time I cannot speak too highly of the service rendered by this gentleman. Have found him most efficient, yet at the same time courteous.

He has been most sympathetic to our problems in the transportation field and, at the same time, I am confident that he has fully protected the law as laid down by the Department of Agriculture.

In my own mind I am sure that he has acted without fear or favour in a diplomatic manner, and I trust that you may find some means of retaining his service, which to all parties concerned has been most courteous over the years.

[Mr. Chevrier.]

It is seldom indeed that we speak out for a civil servant, but I do feel that this is one occasion about which we should bring to your attention in the hope that you may reconsider and retain his services in his present position.

Yours very truly,  
Furness, Withy & Company Limited

Before I proceed, sir, I should say the minister has said that this man was dismissed because of two reasons, first political patronage or activity, and second because he was found in charge of contraband liquor and cigarettes. I want to deal with both these points.

First let me deal with political activity. There is, sir, a method laid down in this house for the dismissal of public servants. It is a method that has been followed over the years by both parties. It is clearly set out in *Hansard*, and I want to put it on record. When a man has been found guilty of political activity he is not discharged because of an affidavit or on account of photographs or for any other reason save the reasons set out in *Hansard*.

That was agreed upon in Sir Robert Borden's day, by the late Lord Bennett, by the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier and by the late Mackenzie King. I hope the house will bear with me for just a moment while I put on *Hansard* the method and the resolution that were adopted by both parties at the time concerning dismissals in the public service. I refer to the statement made by Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, which will be found in *Hansard* of June 22, 1936, at page 4039. Mr. Bennett rose that day to deal with a certain dismissal, and after referring to the difference between the inside service and the outside service he proceeded to quote what Sir Robert Borden had said in an earlier debate, as follows:

In 1911, when Sir Robert Borden came into office, a discussion took place in the first session regarding the question of patronage and dismissals from the public service. Sir Robert Borden said:

"I would like to point out to my hon. friend what he seems to have forgotten, that with respect to both the inside service and the outside service this matter has been settled. In the first place by a statute of Canada concerning the inside service, in the second place by a resolution of this house, concurred in by both political parties with regard to the outside service. So far as the inside service is concerned, the statutory provision to which I desire to call attention is to be found in the act of 1908 introduced and passed by the late administration. Section 43 of that statute is as follows:"

Now the appropriate section of the present Civil Service Act is a different one; it has been amended, and it can be found in the present act.

Sir Robert Borden went on:

"Now, so far as the outside service is concerned, the rule was embodied in a resolution of the House of Commons moved by Mr. Lake on the 17th July,