

Mr. CASGRAIN: My hon. friend and those who led the opposition at that time wanted to have the condition put before the country. At that time what they were doing was playing politics.

An hon. MEMBER: What are you doing?

Mr. CASGRAIN: I am not playing politics to-day more than my hon. friends did in those days. I want to bring this government face to face with the situation that exists to-day. In 1930 the Minister of Justice advocated a certain thing; he said it was necessary and should be done. To-day he accuses me of having been one of those who defeated his motion. In those days, of course, they were catering for the votes of the people. The Minister of Justice says to-day that at that time the treasury was full, and that is true; but since the Tory party has been in power five years the treasury is empty. It is always the same story. When the Liberals are in power they fix things nicely; there is abundance.

An hon. MEMBER: They have Beauharnois.

Mr. CASGRAIN: But when the Tory party comes in, within a year or two the treasury is empty and we are up to the neck in debt. We are loaded down with debt.

An hon. MEMBER: And titles.

Mr. CASGRAIN: And titles too. To-day the position is this. This government, which must soon face the electorate, made promises in 1930. They declared then that things would be changed; no one would suffer; no one who was willing to work would go without work, and every man would get six days' employment in the week; there would be money in everybody's pocket. The Minister of Justice in those days wanted the mail carriers to get more money. Well, have my hon. friends done it? No. Are we not justified therefore, can we be charged with playing politics, when we remind the government of their sins of omission and commission in these five years? The answer the Minister of Justice has given is a poor one, and the answer the Minister of Labour makes is poorer.

Mr. GORDON: I rise to protest. My hon. friend says my answer was poorer than the answer given by the Minister of Justice. I have not answered yet.

Mr. CASGRAIN: My hon. friend knows how to take it; he is a good sport. If it was wrong in those days not to give proper
[Mr. Guthrie.]

remuneration to these employees, surely it is as bad if not worse for this government to refuse to-day to do something for them, when people are starving and when in the rural districts a few dollars more to a mail contractor would mean quite a lot. The government has been remiss in its duty in the last five years; it has not done the proper thing by the people of the country, and when the day of reckoning comes hon. gentlemen opposite will be put where they deserve to be.

Mr. SANDERSON: This question of remuneration to rural mail carriers is very interesting. The Minister of Labour was not in the house in 1930 but the present Minister of Railways was. The Minister of Justice, who has just left his seat and gone out, was in the house then. I have a recollection of a speech—I have sent out for a copy of Hansard; it may not be here for a few minutes—that the present Minister of Justice made in the session of 1930 when he almost shed tears as he sat over on this side.

An hon. MEMBER: He did shed tears.

Mr. SANDERSON: Yes, I believe he did, in regard to the starvation wages that the poor rural mail carriers were getting under the former administration. Moreover, the speech that he delivered on that occasion was sent out among the tons of campaign literature that was sent from Ottawa on behalf of the Conservative party in 1930. That is not the whole story. The famous speech made by the present Minister of Justice on rural mail carriers was printed and was sent to every rural mail contractor in the Dominion of Canada, along with the printed promise, one of the many, many promises that the Conservative party made in 1930, that if the King government of that day were turned out of office and a Conservative government came in, every rural mail carrier would automatically have his contract cancelled and be put upon a basis of so much per mile per annum.

This is not a new question at all. It was one that was debated very many times in the session of 1930, and I want to point out now to the Minister of Labour that if he will take the trouble to look over the rural mail contracts, especially in Ontario—and I think the same thing will apply to all the other provinces—he will find that as regards the contracts which have expired under this government since 1930 and have been advertised for tenders, in many instances the contractor of to-day is getting at least a fifty per cent lower rate for the work he is doing than he was getting in 1930.