

Post Office Act

we do not influence the Liberals. They stand together back to back, block to block.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: And they clap at their own idiocy. The people we influence in this parliament, whether we speak from that side of the house, this side of the house or even in that corner where they clap so much, are the Canadian people—public opinion. When public opinion is influenced, that is what democracy is about. When a government cannot stand the heat, it gets out because public opinion has found that it is wrong. We have seen governments retreat. The last Liberal government was a retreating government. This government says it is going to bull its way through, no matter what. That is the attitude of this government.

I should like to put on record the opinion of the daily newspapers. I am sure the hon. member for Calgary South received a letter from the daily newspaper in our city. This is the newspaper opinion I should like to quote:

Postmaster General Eric Kierans continues to display a lamentable misunderstanding of the significance of his proposal to increase newspaper postal rates by 100 per cent on news content and 300 per cent on advertising content.

It is interesting to note that we are increasing our rates on second class mail by 100 per cent and 300 percent, while the United States—and I am taking into account the concentration of population—has only increased its rate by 13 per cent or 14 per cent.

It is the subscribers who get their newspapers by mail—rural subscribers in particular—who will bear the brunt of this tremendous jump in cost, not the newspaper.

The minister really has said to the daily newspapers that the farmers are not entitled to their mail. We know that the other minister has handed over the farms to the chartered banks of Canada because of the interest rates. Now this minister has taken away the weekly and daily newspapers from the farmers by these costs. The quotation continues:

Yet Mr. Kierans complained in the House of Commons on Tuesday that the present post office 'subsidy' to newspaper publishers amounts to around \$37 million.

Does the problem not boil down to one thing, the financial priorities? It is fine for this government to squander \$54 million on the national arts centre, which will cost this nation perhaps \$3 million or \$4 million a year to operate. That is fine. But it is not fine that we should subsidize the consumers or sub-

[Mr. Woolliams.]

scribers of the daily newspapers of the nation in the amount of \$30 million. We squander \$54 million, and another \$3 million per year to operate this arts centre, and when will it be finished? The Prime Minister has suggested that we cannot knock this down now because it has cost the nation too much money.

An hon. Member: Order.

Mr. Woolliams: That is their attitude. An hon. member has said "order". He has been out of order mentally and physically since he came here.

Newspapers do not recover production costs from subscriptions; they rely on advertisements for their revenue.

An hon. Member: \$145 million for the C.B.C.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Someone said "Hear, hear". Obviously he is getting good coverage over the C.B.C. I should like to ask the government how it is that the C.B.C. can come to this government, when we are worrying about deficits in this country, and ask for moneys in the way of loans which will never be paid back, without the approval of parliament? If that is not discrimination—and I have some respect for the C.B.C. because it was created under a Conservative government—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Woolliams: This is discrimination against the daily and weekly newspapers in preference to the C.B.C., so far as the dissemination of news is concerned.

May I call it eleven o'clock, sir?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): It now being eleven o'clock I shall rise and report progress and seek leave to sit at the next sitting of the house.

Progress reported.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, while the Postmaster General is leisurely considering his answers to all the questions put to him today, I should like to ask the house leader to consider bringing the cash advances bill before the house first thing tomorrow so we can pass that?