

Post Office Act

subsidize the publisher." I say that the country is not subsidizing the publisher at all, and the minister knows that. It is subsidizing the subscriber, the consumer. It is the little man in the country who is buying a daily or weekly newspaper who is subsidized.

I am sure that this is not a new argument to the Liberal backbenchers who have been clapping like trained seals all night. They made this argument themselves.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Woolliams: I realize that they want to howl me down. They made the same argument in caucus to the minister last week. Now they are applauding something they don't even believe in.

There is one thing I will say to the Liberal backbenchers, that the daily and weekly newspapers of this country will know who their friends were. They will know the people who went along with this thing, just because the minister wanted it.

Mr. Mongrain: Would my hon. friend allow a question?

Mr. Woolliams: Certainly I will allow a question.

Mr. Mongrain: Is there anything that prevents the hon. gentleman from asking his questions of the minister here tonight?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would have thought the hon. member would have understood the point I was making.

An hon. Member: What is the point?

Mr. Woolliams: If you had come into this house with your mind as open as your mouth you would be better serving this parliament.

Now I come back to answer my hon. friend opposite. I am not interested in asking the minister questions. I want to ask questions of witnesses. I want to question publishers who have been in the daily and weekly newspaper business, and in the magazine business. If the bill were sent to a standing committee we could hear from representatives of *Time* magazine and *Reader's Digest*. Then I could find out who was being discriminated against. I want to ask questions in a standing committee of those people who have been in the business for a certain length of time. That is

the point I am making. I hope I have made that point very clear.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hees: It takes a while for it to sink in.

Mr. Woolliams: It certainly does. Now we come to the question of subsidies. We know, and the minister and the government know that the extra cost is going to be passed on to the newspaper subscriber. Take the case of the *Calgary Herald* and *The Albertan*: If the subscription costs to their rural readers is now \$12, \$14 or \$15 and the new postal increases are passed on to them they will have to pay \$40 to obtain newspapers in the rural areas outside the city of Calgary. The same will apply in the city of Edmonton. The same situation will exist all across the nation.

This is the evidence we wanted to bring out in a standing committee. The Canadian people want to hear more evidence about the figures the minister has produced. We want to know how those figures were arrived at. We know what happened about the figures in the budget. Even with the use of the great modern equipment, they were only out \$400 million or \$500 million. I know I might hurt the sensitivity of the minister in saying this, but if they can make a mistake like that, then it is quite possible that this minister could be out in his figures. Let us have a committee examine the facts so that those facts can be brought forward in this house in an intelligent manner, so that parliament and then the people will be able to determine whether the figures the minister has now set out in the rate studies are proper.

• (10:50 p.m.)

The minister says there has been some disregard for parliament because we dare debate a bill. What is this bill all about? It is a very important bill. This government is prepared, as another member said, to give a bonus to the C.B.C. of \$150 million. The daily newspapers, the weekly newspapers and periodicals of this nation disseminate the news across the nation. That is what parliament is all about. This is probably the most important bill that will come before parliament. After all, the most important thing in a democracy is an informed public. How can the public become informed if the people do not have an opportunity to read the daily newspapers, the weekly newspapers and periodicals? After all, we have found out during this debate that