which at Easter time distributes Easter seals, as well as the key tag service.

The president of the war amputees has suggested, Mr. Chairman, if such classification is not feasible, that parliament approve a financial grant similar to that suggested by the Glassco commission for second class mail. This grant, the president states, would be in the form of a rebate based on extra mailing costs arising out of the increase from three to five cents in the third class rate.

I am pleased to endorse this special request of the war amputees of Canada. I hope that the minister has had an opportunity since receiving this brief from the war amputees to give the matter consideration, and that he can give us some indication of what his department is planning to do to financially assist in some way this very worthy and needy group of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, I would have a few brief remarks to make about the discussion now going on.

First of all, I would like to point out that the hon. members for South Shore and Hillsborough (Messrs. Crouse and Macquarrie) have made constructive contributions to the debate although they might not bear any relation to the questions which arise with regard to that bill if it is to be studied in a general way.

I wish to recall just the same what the learned member for Hillsborough said when he tried in his own way to refer to the principle mentioned by General de Gaulle to the effect that one must go to the bottom of things without allowing oneself to be influenced by personal interests or any partisan consideration whatsoever, which has a lot to be said for it.

Starting from that principle, Mr. Chairman, I find absolutely shocking the figures just quoted by the minister. In fact, some newspapers and publications receive extravagant subsidies from the government at the expense of all taxpayers and there is no comparison between the subsidies granted by the government to one newspaper or another. He just said that some newspapers take advantage of those indirect subsidies and charge a very inadequate subscription rate, and I again use the word "shocking" to qualify the advertisement rates which are of another order, indeed.

[Mr. Crouse.]

Anyhow the government must practise some distributive justice in granting direct or indirect subsidies.

We have noticed also in this house, Mr. Chairman, that the minister has made certain concessions up to now to please my hon. friends the members of the opposition. He has taken into account the suggestions made by his colleagues, the members on the government side of the house, as well as some of those made by the members of the opposition. Perhaps he will be willing to make other concessions as the debate continues on specific clauses. I am not sure, but I think that he has already shown some indication of good will.

However, we always come back to a principle which we must not forget and which some of our hon. friends in the opposition seem to overlook, and that is the question of who is to pay for the services provided by the government.

This afternoon, I heard a member of the Ralliement créditiste or of the opposition say: If the minister raises the postal rate for newspapers, the subscribers are the ones who will pay the cost. Let us say, for the benefit of the discussion, that it is true. Would it be more fair for the government to impose on all taxpayers, poor or rich, the deficit of the Post Office Department? Is that distributive justice? It is a fact, though. Does it not compel the government to impose the burden on those who profit by these subventions, namely the publishers as well as the subscribers, rather than on all taxpayers who, in many cases, do not earn high wages? In my opinion, distributive justice always brings us back to the principle that the users of a service have to pay for it. But there is more than that, Mr. Chairman.

• (9:50 p.m.)

It was mentioned earlier that this surcharge could be distributed over a period of two, three or four years, but I say that in two, three or four years, it will be too late for the government to make both ends meet. Now I come to the essential point.

The increase in mail rates was discussed in detail with reference being made to specific cases which in my opinion are definitely of minor importance. We must not forget what is essentially at stake, and nobody in this house will suggest that what I say is not entirely true. All Western countries are now going through a painful financial crisis and we have seen what happened in Great Britain