

Mr. TALBOT. Who is responsible for the printing and publishing?

Mr. BERGERON. There is nothing inside to show where it comes from, but that can be easily imagined because it serves the purpose of the Liberal party.

Mr. TALBOT. The hon. gentleman does not object to the pamphlet?

Mr. BERGERON. I do, I say it is false.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Does the Minister of Finance allude to the franking of this by the department?

Mr. FIELDING. I asked whether the objection was to the franking or the labour of distribution.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I have now in my possession envelopes bearing the frank of one of the departments of this government, which were franked when the House was not in session, and which covered campaign literature.

Mr. FIELDING. If the distribution of campaign literature and the franking by one side is objectionable, I suppose it is equally objectionable on the other side.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I am not alluding to that.

Mr. FIELDING. I know that a year or two ago, the corridors of this House were barricaded with literature which hon. gentlemen opposite brought from the city of Montreal in order that it might be franked through the mails here.

Mr. LANCASTER. During the session.

Mr. FIELDING. Certainly, what is the ground therefore of the objection made now? I am not discussing the question of the labour employed, but surely hon. gentlemen opposite cannot take exception to the franking when they themselves have used the privilege enormously.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The regulations with regard to franking by members of parliament provide that it can be used in respect of any matter whatever, but there is no such provision with regard to the franking by departments of the government. They are restricted to matters of official business. I was referring to franking by a department when the House is not in session—to franking by members of the administration, not as members of parliament, but as members of the government. I can produce a document bearing the frank of one of the departments—and it is only one instance of thousands of the same character—conveying to the person to whom it was addressed, not matter of official business at all but simply certain campaign literature of the party opposite. That is

not a fair or legitimate use of the franking privilege.

Mr. FIELDING. No doubt, the theory of the franking privilege is that it should be confined to official purposes; no doubt the intention was that members of parliament should have the privilege of franking letters to their constituents on public business and receiving, free of postage, letters of the same description. But that theory has been considerably broadened and members have not confined themselves to absolutely official publications.

Mr. FOSTER. But this is not a matter of custom at all.

Mr. FIELDING. No doubt if any hon. gentleman desired to address a letter to any one on other than public business during the session he would be free to put his initials on the corner. If that may be pardoned in the case of a member of parliament—and it is only a privilege for a limited period—I do not see how it must be wrong in the case of a minister.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. In the one case, the statute specifically gives the privilege my hon. friend has referred to. In the other case, it does not give any department any such privilege. That is the distinction between the two.

Mr. FIELDING. I am perfectly sure the intention was that members of parliament should only use the franking privilege for special correspondence.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The statutes say directly the opposite.

Mr. BERGERON. This was franked by the Department of Justice, and the franking was done before the opening of parliament. These pamphlets were distributed before the House opened.

Mr. FOWLER. If the statements in the pamphlet are erroneous, it would come very properly from the Department of Justice as at present administered.

Mr. SPROULE. The franking of this publication and its distribution for political purposes come with very bad grace from the hon. gentleman's department (Mr. Ayleseworth), who made such a vigorous speech in opposition to my motion for a return showing the number of Roman Catholic and Protestant employees in the service of Canada. He deprecated any motion of the kind because, he said, it was bound to arouse race and religious prejudices. Yet we have his department distributing a pamphlet, such as the one referred to, purporting to come from the Jesuit fathers in New York, with the picture of Sir Wilfrid Laurier on it, and intended to mislead the Roman Catholics