

Post Office Act

100 per cent return, believe me, but a reasonable return—on its actual costs, or an approximation of those costs. On the other hand, there may be many people who want a subsidized medical journal, and perhaps the answer is for the hon. member for Hillsborough and myself to increase our donations to the economists and political scientists in this country.

In regard to the situation mentioned by the hon. member for South Shore, there is a case of interest to all of us. We are all aware of the tremendous work that war amputees are doing to sustain themselves and to be independent. They provide a service to the people of Canada, and I think most of us return a cheque to them in the envelope they send us. Perhaps this year our cheques should be worth a little more, in which case it would enable them to meet their problem.

The hon. member for South Shore suggested that parliament itself might vote a grant to the war amputees organization. Although this debate has been drawn out over the last four days, a number of points have emerged of which the Canadian people were not previously aware. One of them is that there have been all sorts of hidden grants made to all sorts of bodies to meet increased costs. Some bodies might have been able to meet those costs independently, but some do find difficulty and have to present their case to the people. Having received support in the past the people naturally have sympathy for the particular activity concerned.

It is not part of the function of a department that provides services to continue hidden subsidies, whether to the National Arts Council or to other bodies, when there are crown corporations or bodies that are chiefly concerned with the matter. In the case of the arts council the Secretary of State is involved. The deficits of such bodies are taken into account when their annual grants are made in a recognized forum. We know very well that a subsidy is being provided, whether that subsidy is to some consumer co-operative movement, to the National Arts Council, to the Winnipeg ballet, or what have you. But, we do not want hidden any more the subsidy in postal rates.

A distinction must be drawn. We have talked about the definitions of Canadian newspapers or publications. These publications are put out primarily for the benefit of the members of a particular profession, whether they are in the field of agriculture, medicine, economics or political science.

An hon. Member: It might be the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

Mr. Kierans: Yes. The *Canadian Medical Association Journal* will be in there, so will the *Canadian Hereford Digest* which does not affect me. The *United Church Observer* will not be included in the list of specialized publications, since it is of general interest to its membership at large, as distinct from a bulletin put out by a particular parish in the United Church.

Similarly, the *Canadian Boy* is the official publication of the Boy Scouts of Canada, and is of general interest to the entire movement. On the other hand, a certain group in Montreal or in St. Boniface if it put out a publication, would not come under the general definition. Yet all these publications have been contributing to the problems of the post office.

Many hon. members have asked, "How did the post office suddenly get in a mess?". Well, it is not in a mess.

Mr. Dinsdale: But it will be.

Mr. Kierans: It has a deficit of over \$99 million because members of this house on many previous occasions have refused to accept their responsibilities, either when they were in power or in opposition. The 1951 bill was emasculated, and between 1957 and 1962 no bill came forward. A bill was withdrawn in 1964, and another defeated in 1967.

Hon. members have asked me to meet with members of every association, and I dare say nobody in this committee of the whole is not aware of certain worthy cases which might be brought to mind. The point is that when anyone cries for a balanced budget, any individual who comes forward says, "Do not balance the budget at our expense".

It has also been said that increases range up to 300 percentage points. When you start at 10 per cent and increase the rate by 50 per cent, you arrive at a final figure of 15 per cent. Yet if costs go up by 10 per cent in one year, they go from 100 per cent to 110 per cent. I admit that this is a radical attempt to bring the post office into the land of common sense.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Kierans: I will guarantee the figures I have laid before the house. They are the result of four years of intensive work by people inside and outside the department.