

sponsible; they are charged with the function of trying to provide the necessary means to provide the necessary money. But this Parliament and the people of this country have the responsibility. The words of the Minister of Public Works should sink deep into the hearts of the Canadian people, and they should not divest themselves, as indeed they cannot divest themselves—of responsibility in connection with the management of our public affairs. I was struck very recently with an expression used by an ex-minister of the Crown. In talking with me he said that thrift has apparently become a vice or a crime in the country. The people seem to have the idea that the golden stream should pour not only from the spigot, but from the bung-hole as well. Is thrift a crime?

Let us look at the developments in connection with the Printing Bureau. As chairman of the Debates Committee it has been my duty to visit the Printing Bureau on different occasions, and I came to the conviction that of all the patronage cesspools out of Hades, the Printing Bureau was the worst. It so sickened me that I thought: how can Canada ever succeed if that sort of thing goes on? Perhaps I will be pardoned for saying that last session I went to the Prime Minister and told him about the state of affairs at the Bureau. He was pretty busy at the time, but he gave me a moment or two, and I said to him: "If you, Sir Robert, will place me in charge of the Printing Bureau for one year and give me a free hand, I will promise to cut the expenditure in two and I shall not charge the country one farthing for my services." Sir Robert did not give me a direct answer; he asked me to confer with another member of the Cabinet. Of course, I did not do so, but I thought it was a rare opportunity for a reformer—I call myself a reformer—just to give one object lesson as to what could be done at the Printing Bureau. The mess has been exposed, and a sickening mess it is. I do not blame the present Government, although they have been in office over a year and might have taken some radical action to cure the evil. But it has been the result of the political partisan system practised by both parties for the last twenty-five or thirty years, and both are responsible.

Now, what has happened in the Printing Bureau has, in my judgment, happened before and is happening, though perhaps not to the same disgusting extent, all over the Civil Service of the country. I have not time to tell all the things that have

come under my observation; I should not like to tire the House by relating all these particular cases. But it is my deliberate judgment that from the Atlantic to the Pacific things exist in the public service of Canada, and have existed under all Governments for thirty, forty, or fifty years that are a disgrace to the country and that, if not corrected, will sap the life-blood of the country. You cannot allow a cancer or sore like that to exist on the body politic for an indefinite time and expect that body politic to be healthy or to survive. Unless it is cured, it will eat the vitals of the country ultimately, as the cancer will eat the body of the man who contracts it. Would to Heaven that this Government would let me name one commission. I am not very favourable to commissions. We have had a great many of them, but I should like to be able to name one commission that would go from the Atlantic to the Pacific and carve this cancer out. Let us get rid of the barnacles, the thousands who have fastened themselves on the body politic and are eating its vitals out. We had better put our cards on the table in reference to this Civil Service. The Printing Bureau is not the only place; let us clean the whole thing out from stem to gudgeon. It is a big task, a tremendous task; it will require men of firmness, men of courage, men careful of the public interest. Such men are to be found in this country, and if they were given a fair opportunity I believe that this Civil Service could be cleaned up. And the time to do that is when the Union Government is in office; when the Liberals of this country have united with the Conservatives for the purpose of grappling with the vast problems that confront Canada at the present time. That is the only time in which this work can be properly and effectively done, and in God's name, let it be done, Mr. Speaker.

Let me give you a little instance of what I found when I was a member of the Debates Committee twenty odd years ago. We discovered that a number of the translators were drawing large pay and were farming the jobs out to girls at one-fourth or one-fifth the amount they were receiving from the country. I had a notion, in my own foolish little way, that when a thing like that was discovered it could be corrected, and I moved that these men be dismissed. Remember, I was a supporter—at least I thought I was—of the Liberal Government. I moved that these men be dismissed. What do you suppose happened? The Chairman, who came from the province of Quebec—I shall not mention his name—refused to put