

*Post Office Act*

It would be a tragedy if the *University of Toronto Quarterly* and the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* were to perish while *Time* magazine flourished. Surely we have sufficient ingenuity in this highly computerized age to cope with the situation. I may say that I listened carefully to the minister's reply to the very serious and searching question put to him by the hon. member for Winnipeg North. However, like Agrippa, I was not persuaded. It seems to me that with the ability which he personally has and all that he can command from his colleagues and others, some way could be found to deal with this matter. I must plead at this late stage that some way be found of preserving the academic press in this country. We know how the Canada Council is so frequently asked for help. We talk so much about our Canadian identity, we talk so much about trying to enhance our university standards and to enrich our intellectual life, that to inflict upon our struggling academic journals the kind of things they have complained about is shameful, and I use that word advisedly.

I am wondering also whether the minister, who has been talking in rather general terms about newspaper publishers and their place in society, has given any thought to the matter which the hon. member for Oxford raised earlier in the discussion. We find that one arm of the government, if I may use that expression, namely the Canadian radio and television commission, is looking at one of the media and is referring to the consolidation of ownership and control. I wonder if in this whole elaborate process of sorting out newspapers, defining what is a Canadian newspaper and setting up elaborate rates, this very important thought might be considered.

• (9:40 p.m.)

I hope we will be given some further elucidation. Passage of the bill may take longer in committee of the whole than in standing committee, but many matters remain to be answered. We will have to put questions as we go along, about, for example, on the white paper and the reports. Further explanation is required of the deplorable situation in which the post office finds itself.

I hope the minister will retain the flexibility he has displayed hitherto, Mr. Chairman, and it might well be that he will convince himself that not all wisdom is his, bright as his corner is. We want to assist him in this matter, but this will be difficult. That is why the challenge upon us to assist in the passage of this legislation is all the greater.

**Mr. Crouse:** Mr. Chairman, it is not my intention to speak at great length on this bill. The concept enunciated by the Postmaster General—that the post office be made to pay its way—is a very interesting one. In view of the state of the country's finances as announced by the Minister of Finance on Tuesday night, it would appear that the Postmaster General can follow no other course than the one he is on at present.

However, Mr. Chairman, it is now evident that the increases in postage rates that he has announced will pose serious problems for several voluntary health and welfare agencies. For example, all members of parliament have been made aware of the impact that will be made by the postage rates increase on the key tag service that is carried on by the war amputees of Canada.

This association, The War Amputations of Canada, organized in 1948, embarked upon a self-help program to provide sheltered employment for war amputees and to produce revenue to finance welfare needs of seriously disabled persons and their families. In recent years this organization has also provided financial and other aid to children and elderly civilian amputees.

The key tag service, which all of us enjoy and to which I presume most members of parliament subscribe and find useful, requires the mailings of some six and a half million key tags at reasonable postage rates every year. The announced increase in third class rates to five cents per letter on November 1 represents an increase of 66½ per cent. The operating profit of this organization, Mr. Chairman, is minimal, owing to the necessity to operate on a sheltered workshop basis, thus providing much needed employment for disabled veterans. However, this increase of 66½ per cent means higher production costs than those faced by ordinary businesses.

Surely, Mr. Chairman, it is not necessary for us to add further to the burdens of our war veterans, who have already carried more than their fair share of the load on behalf of all Canadians and in defence of freedom everywhere. The dominion president of The War Amputations of Canada has asked that the Postmaster General consider the creation of a special classification for voluntary health and welfare organizations which offer a product to the public. This would include such organizations as the Canadian Tuberculosis Association, which distributes the Christmas seals we will soon be receiving in the mail, the Canadian Society for Crippled Children,