

Post Office Act

notice that the Minister of Defence Production (Mr. Jamieson) is laughing. I hope he is listening to what I am saying because it is very important. Right in the middle of the fishing season this great government which is dedicated to the concept of an end to regional disparity eliminated a program with a dire effect on the people of the Atlantic provinces.

Another action on the part of the government which is making a mockery of the Prime Minister's promise of a just society and an end to regional disparity is the discontinuation of the winter works program. Having served as deputy mayor of the city I now represent in this house, I know for a fact that despite what hon. gentlemen opposite say the discontinuance of this program will have a serious effect on the people of St. John's as, indeed, it will have on people in other areas. There will be Newfoundlanders on relief this winter. Newfoundlanders will have to go begging for relief. They will have to draw unemployment insurance. They will have to humble themselves to get handouts to keep body and soul together as a result of the termination of these two programs which the Prime Minister and his government, the champions of the just society, the champions of an end to regional disparity, have discontinued. Because of this, Newfoundlanders will be hungry, except for government relief and handouts given by other agencies. This is sad.

• (5:30 p.m.)

This legislation is further proof of the government's complete disregard for the conditions that exist in the have-not provinces, especially the province of Newfoundland which I have the honour to represent. If the past two or three months are any indication of the government's desire and plan to end regional disparity I say it is not inconceivable that within a certain period separatism will not be confined to the province of Quebec. It is about time that some special consideration and equal rights were given to the have-not provinces. Especially, sir, do I plead for consideration, for equal status and equal rights for the province of Newfoundland.

I should like to bring the Postmaster General up to date on certain conditions with regard to postal services that exist in my riding. In the heart of the city of St. John's we still have post offices that have not been improved to any great extent since confederation. One of the largest post offices in that city is operating out of a temporary war building that is in no way adequate for the purpose. The main post office in St. John's

[Mr. Carter.]

West is housed in a building that should have been condemned decades ago. I challenge the Postmaster General to come with me some time to St. John's and take a look at some of the postal facilities there. Let him look at the post office in St. John's West and then let him tell me that the service which is been given in that post office, because of its inadequate facilities, justifies an increase in postal rates.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wish to stress the point I have already made, that the new postal rates will have a serious effect on the people of my province, on the people of the other have-not provinces and, I suppose, on all Canadians. I cannot help but think that the Postmaster General has acted with excessive haste in this matter, and I believe that the difficulties of the post office, which undoubtedly require attention, were aggravated by this summer's settlement with the postal workers.

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, I believe it is my duty as the representative of Moose Jaw constituency to speak out on the amendment now before the house. I support in its entirety the amendment moved by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) and seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). I believe it is most important that this bill be referred to a standing committee for thorough consideration by hon. members.

I realize that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) has an obligation with respect to piloting bills through the house, but today I was very much surprised to hear him use blackmail as an attempt to have this post office bill passed in order that we might proceed with the agricultural legislation that has been before the house. I believe it was never the intention of parliament to use this system of manipulating procedures in the house in order to get a bill through that is as completely unacceptable to the Canadian people as is this one.

A news item in the Regina *Leader-Post* of last Friday reported the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) as suggesting that the opposition is delaying help to the farmers. Now we have the President of the Privy Council suggesting to us that if we pass this bill in a hurry we will be able to return to the cash advance legislation which will assist farmers. This makes me wonder where we are going in our present-day democratic society. I am sure all hon. members are anxious to get the