

Post Office Act

given all sorts of goodies and they are asked to vote after being reminded of the goodies they got the previous year. It has always been the same, Mr. Speaker, and I say that if the minister or his government had shown before the election, the true financial picture to the Canadian people, the results would naturally not have been the same.

I see here, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Côté) who nods—

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Minister of National Revenue): I was bowing to Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Asselin: I apologize, he says that he was bowing to Mr. Speaker.

I know that the minister understands that if his government had been candid with the voters at the time of the last election, if it had simply said to the people what was the financial condition of the government, less Liberal members would have been elected. We will know tonight the impact of this government's improvising policy.

I say to the minister—he has known it for a long time—that a minister of the Crown who wants to have a bill passed by the house must give evidence that he is right in bringing it in. It is not up to the members to prove to the minister that he is wrong in imposing taxes, and if I read carefully the minister's speech given at the stage of second reading of the bill, I find that the only reason he has invoked to increase the postal rates was his wish to make up a deficit. There again, I repeat what I said earlier—that it would have been more logical for the minister to consider what was wrong in the department, and then proceed to the required reorganization. In a few years, the minister will have to face the problem of automation and he will have to take other decisions. Before increasing taxes, the minister ought to know the facts about the Post Office Department and not merely introduce a bill and say what a member of the board of the Montreal Stock Exchange might say: There is a deficit, so much money is needed, such taxes must be imposed. This is more or less what the minister said the other day.

Obviously, some opposition members have objected, and still do, to that measure. We were terribly happy, Mr. Speaker, when we heard there were Liberal members who were also against this bill.

Mr. Mongrain: You are misinformed.

[Mr. Asselin.]

Mr. Asselin: No. And yet, it has been published in newspapers. I think that the minister said it himself, as reported in *Hansard* on page 1603, and I quote:

However, Mr. Speaker, in respect of the latter reduction in service it has become apparent as a result of representations made directly to me, and by members here including the 35 men good and true—

An hon. Member: Liberals.

Mr. Asselin: Obviously they were Liberals.—and the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Cyr)—

Indeed, the minister had to convey his little political message; we forgive him all that, knowing that it is done in every parliament. We thought it would go no further. But then the flatterer came out; we saw the member for Gaspé rise in the house and say: The opposition should stop talking; we should pass this bill. Then he started showering flattery on the Postmaster General. It was obvious that the member for Gaspé had been under the steam-roller. It was easy to see and to guess. As concerns the 35 others who were with him, we did not hear about them. The member was told: Listen, keep quiet, and make a nice speech to support the bill.

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The member for Charlevoix says that 35 Liberal members are objecting to the bill and immediately after, that 35 members are objecting to a clause of the bill. There is a difference on that point and surely the honourable member for Charlevoix should not report inaccuracies.

• (4:40 p.m.)

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the honourable member to follow my speech more carefully because he did not understand it.

I only pointed out that, according to the minister—and that has been reported in the press—the honourable member for Gaspé joined 35 liberal members in opposing the minister's bill. If the honourable member for Trois-Rivières could reveal the secrets of his party caucus, he would have to agree that what I said a while ago was accurate. I said that these 35 gentlemen whom the minister mentioned have been made to toe the line. That is why we have seen last night the honourable member for Gaspé bowing and scraping and telling to the minister that he was a smart operator. These people change their mind very quickly.