

rates to the public or wait for a revision of the Government rates by Parliament. The press representatives who have come here last week have been so insistent upon retaining the right of Parliament to fix the rates, and upon the injury that would be worked upon them if rates were fixed in advance, that I have wondered if the Postmaster General should not yield to their demand. They say, 'We have since 1867 been under the supervision of Parliament. It is true that you make this Parliament a tribunal of final appeal, but here we are in June: it may take some time for us to discuss with the Post Office Department the rates that should be fixed. It may take a month or two before we agree, or agree to disagree; we will be within but a few months of next session. What harm is there to the country in allowing the present law to remain on the statute-book as it is; let Parliament have full control over the fixing of rates, and from this until next session the post office will arrange a schedule to be presented at the opening of the ensuing session.' There is also the other argument which has its weight. The newspapers have been carried at a certain rate, and their rates to the public have been fixed in consequence. It seems to me that there is a principle of equity in the post office preparing a new schedule three or four months in advance, and notifying the newspaper community throughout the land that at the ensuing session of Parliament these rates will be presented to Parliament for ratification. I recognize that there will be a certain loss to the post office but this should not represent an immense sum. I would urge my hon. friend to discuss this matter with the Postmaster General, and ask him if he should not revise his judgment and allow Parliament the right to fix and levy rates as heretofore. I have approached this matter with an absolutely open mind. I had thought that the amendment which we were making in committee would be satisfactory. I recognize that we are departing from an old state of things. When rates are fixed by Parliament, they stand for a long time. I believe the existing rates were fixed under the regime of Sir William Mulock eight or ten years ago. The press recognizes that a higher rate should be paid by them, than they pay now.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—Why has my hon. friend changed his mind since he moved the amendment that he adopted?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—Because of the argument that has been made, and I challenge my hon. friend to answer that argument, that a rate fixed provisionally, which newspapers will have to stand for four or five months, with the hope of its being revised, would leave them in that state of mind which would prevent them from reorganizing their own rates to the public, in order that they might not have to stand the loss alone. They say that these rates will necessitate a revision of the rates they charge the public for newspapers and periodicals, and they would not like to be in that unsettled state for several months until Parliament meets and hears their last appeal.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—What right has the hon. gentleman to assume that the post office authorities are going to do a grave injustice to the press? Are not the post office authorities authorized and charged by law to do business with the public in the public interest?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—I felt that way when I joined hands with my hon. friend to try and frame an amendment which would safeguard the right of appeal to Parliament. We did not hear the newspaper men upon our amendment to the extent that we have heard them since that amendment has been in black and white. The argument they made is that they would like the matter to be fixed once for all, and not be in that unsettled state of being left with the hope in their mind that if they find the rate injurious, Parliament may remedy their grievance.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The principal point to consider is whether the adoption of this amendment would result in the withdrawal of the Bill. It is an amendment which, if accepted by the Commons, would only defer the settlement of the question of what the rates should be. The whole discussion seems to be upon the rate of postage. There is another and very important point that has been urged and properly so by the Press Association, and that is the classification of matter that passes through the mails. How far has the Postmaster General been justified in the past in declaring certain periodicals, semi-monthly and some tri-weekly, as not being newspapers, and consequently subject to a much higher rate of postage? That is a very important point to be settled by the department hereafter, and if all these regulations must be approved by Parliament, before a change can