

*Post Office Act*

which every Canadian, rich or poor, great or humble, will be able to enjoy. This again is a statement, similar to many others which have been made in this house, which must not be taken seriously.

Mr. Speaker, in closing we can say that such a measure really does hurt everyone. However, we must remember the words spoken by the late President Kennedy: Think of what you can do for your country rather than what your country can do for you. If our country must continue to pile up deficits, if our country must continue to subsidize self-supporting firms by increasing the burden of taxation resting on the shoulders of the poor people and of the little man, the government does not show any distributive justice. But, in a legislation like this one, the government is practising distributive justice; it has the courage to take such actions which enable it to make ends meet and when it will have done it, it will be able to maintain and perhaps to increase this confidence which foreign investors show by investing in Canada, so that our business firms expand and that other firms come into being. There would be less unemployment and misery at home thanks to real money and not through empty promises nor artificially inflated balloons.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, I support the bill of the honourable minister generally, while I shall perhaps support some amendments that he will himself propose.

● (4:30 p.m.)

**Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix):** Mr. Speaker, when the member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Mongrain) rose to give his speech, of course I expected him to support the measure of the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans).

Mr. Speaker, I see with astonishment that some of our friends opposite have returned to the fold of the Liberal party; every day some of them practice what I would call a "boot-licking" policy as we have witnessed in the course of the present debate.

The member for Trois-Rivières obviously spoke certain truths and on some points we agree. But when he tells us that the minister had the courage to levy taxes and that to his mind, that is the only way to correct the situation, I come to the conclusion that the member could not possibly have studied the bill in depth to make such gratuitous assertions. Let us dwell on this point. It is easy to say that we have a deficit and that it must be made up by levying taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I read very carefully the speech the minister made when he moved second reading. He then said: For some years now, the Post Office Department has had deficits in various amounts of up to one hundred million dollars. Unless taxes are increased, it will have an even larger deficit next year. The minister also told us what the reasons were in his opinion, for the deficit over the years in the Post Office Department.

It is true that, in the course of his speech, the minister told us that he had entrusted to experts the task of studying the postal services in depth. But I maintain that the minister is going backwards. If he wants to levy a tax to make up the deficit, to my mind, he should start by finding out the reason for the deficit.

The minister immediately applies a "band-aid" by imposing a tax which will not cover the deficit of the Post Office Department. He could at least have given some thought to low income earners who will again be penalized by the tax imposed by the minister. If the minister at least had spread out his tax increase over a period of two or three years, perhaps it would have less inconvenienced those who will have to pay the bill.

The hon. member for Trois-Rivières says that the members of the opposition are against the measure. Naturally, we are against a further increase in the taxes paid by the taxpayers, and when my hon. friend sat in this house as an independent member, he also sometimes opposed a tax increase imposed by the government. He was with us then. I understand that, today, he is bound by party discipline, and I am surprised to see that the hon. member for Trois-Rivières should conform so graciously to this discipline imposed by the Liberal party. I did not know that aspect of his character before.

The hon. member for Trois-Rivières told us that the minister shows courage in imposing a tax. I say that neither the minister nor the government is justified in doing this. Before the last election, the Liberals showed much more courage in telling the Canadian people: We will have to impose taxes, and you will have to judge us on our political program. However, there was no question of raising taxes before the general election, and the party in power has shown itself very cunning in the administration of the country for the past thirty or thirty-five years.

At the beginning of a term of office, taxes are imposed in all sectors. At the end of the mandate, near the third year, the voters are