

parliament from what we have had for the last fifteen years. This is the connection between the item and what I am saying. I do not think there should be any acrobatics with respect to the position of Prime Minister. What is most important is not to remain in office but to have the confidence of members of parliament by consulting them, by giving them inspiration to fight for a definite program in the old manner, the manner of Laurier, of Ernest Lapointe, of George P. Graham, of Ned Macdonald, of Fielding and all the others I have known and fought under. It is time the Liberal party changed its attitude of worship of one man and returned to the old system of co-operation between all members of parliament.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order. I must ask the hon. member to deal with the item before the committee. He is not dealing with it at all.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Chairman, this is a vote for the Prime Minister's office for the year ending March 31, 1949. Who will spend that money?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Prime Minister's salary is statutory and not included in the item before the committee. This item just deals with the salaries of staff and other payroll items. The hon. member knows that speeches in committee must be strictly relevant to the item under consideration, and I hope the hon. gentleman will try to deal with the item.

Mr. POULIOT: Yes, sir; and I shall satisfy you as to that. I want to know who will give instructions to the civil servants whose positions are mentioned here, until the end of the fiscal year. If the position of prime minister is statutory, all right.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The salary is statutory.

Mr. POULIOT: I am not speaking of that.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will deal with this item.

Mr. POULIOT: Yes, sir. The details of the item are shown on page 223 of the estimates. There is a special assistant to the Prime Minister, a secretary to the office of the Prime Minister, a confidential officer, Prime Minister's office, a head clerk, principal clerks and so on. Who will give instructions as head of that branch of government, from the time of the Liberal convention—if it takes place—until the end of the fiscal year? I am quite in order in asking that question. It is most unpleasant for me to have to do so, but I asked the question yesterday and I want to know if

the gentleman who actually gives instructions to these civil servants enumerated at page 223 of the estimates will be the same gentleman who will give instructions until the end of the fiscal year, and if he will expect to have his name in nomination at the convention, or if he will withdraw it in order that all the other candidates may have an opportunity to run.

I am not going to insist upon it, sir, though I could say much more. I suffered in silence for eighteen years and compared what had happened in the past with what was happening now. I want to see the Liberal party as strong as it was before and I want my colleagues to be successful in the country. I should like to know if the Prime Minister will be a candidate at the next Liberal convention in Ottawa?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Chairman, I might perhaps say a word to my hon. friend. I am afraid I shall have to read his remarks carefully in *Hansard* to grasp what it is he is protesting against, and what it is he wishes me to do or not to do. The hon. member for Temiscouata and I have a very good understanding of each other, but I fail to comprehend tonight what it is he is so greatly disappointed about. I do not think anyone could be more conscious of his many limitations than I am when it comes to being able to satisfy the generous aspirations which so many of my fellow Liberals have had for myself. There is nothing I regret more than that it has not been possible to perform the duties expected of me from day to day, and at the same time see more of the members of the house personally, to do many things which have been left undone during the course of the years that I have held office. There is one thing that I am perfectly sure about, however; it is that I have never at any time, as far as I am aware, forsaken the doctrine of responsible government and attempted to set myself up as a dictator. At all times, I have sought to be guided by the counsel of the cabinet and by my following in the House of Commons, as well as by the opinion of the House of Commons generally as expressed from all sides.

I shall have no regret in my remaining days over not having had full consideration for those who have honoured me with the position that I hold as leader of my party, and who have entrusted me for over twenty-one years with the high office of Prime Minister of our country.

May I say just a word with regard to the office of Prime Minister. I am glad the hon. member brought up the matter; otherwise I should probably not have spoken at this time. I believe he is quite right when he says that