

sions as well, I believe the director of contracts swore that he was compelled to do business with a specified list of firms, which eventually grew to something like eight thousand. Again, if you read the evidence produced at that time, you will find that one great source of the difficulties with regard to purchasing and the scandals which subsequently arose was the patronage in placing contracts.

I bring up these three points at this time for the consideration of the government, and while the minister may not be able to give any definite assurance at the moment, could we have some general assurance with regard to these matters?

Mr. POWER: We can thank the hon. member for the warning he has given us not to fall into any of the errors which may have been committed by past or present governments, or which might be committed by a government which had not been so solemnly warned as we have been to-night. It is the intention to get the very best possible men to do the work. The only assurance that can be given to my hon. friend is that we hope, in giving anyone the wide powers contained in this bill, to be able to confer them on someone who will be above all suspicion. It is the intention to deal directly with manufacturers; almost every section of the bill indicates that. Furthermore, it is the intention to inquire into all sources of supply and to mobilize all industry. I should think that if all the intentions of the bill are fully carried out, there will be no chance whatever for any middlemen. The duty of the minister is to see to it that all the industries in Canada capable of producing munitions and supplies are mobilized in such a way that these will be produced most effectively and most expeditiously. I see no room whatever for either patronage lists or middlemen. The warning which the hon. member has given us will be duly conveyed to whomever is in charge of the department. I am quite sure there will be no reason to complain of any of the evils which he foresees.

Section agreed to.

On section 20—Regulations.

Mr. CAHAN: I suggest some change should be made here.

Mr. POWER: I am prepared to have an amendment moved, and would ask my colleague to move it.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I move:

That after the word "act" in section 20 the following words be added: "and such regulations shall have the same force and effect as if enacted herein."

Mr. CAHAN: I think that will enable the government by regulation to eliminate the middleman and patronage. Such regulations, if made to that end, will have the force of law.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 21—Coming into force.

Mr. MacNICOL: May I ask a question respecting section 6 which, I realize, has been passed? I would direct attention to lines 42, 43, 44 and 45, wherein appear the words:

. . . and generally take steps to mobilize, conserve and coordinate the economic and industrial facilities available in respect of munitions. . . .

And so on. Would that include mobilizing and perhaps compensating inventive geniuses in plants? I have in mind an inventive genius in a plant who has developed a wonderful shell lathe and who, in addition to receiving good pay was given a trip to Scotland by the proprietor of the plant so that the man might recuperate in health for many hours lying awake at night pondering over problems. I am wondering how the government will obtain the services of these geniuses if they cannot be compensated.

Mr. POWER: It has been suggested that perhaps the words, "conserve and coordinate the economic and industrial facilities available," might be meant to cover the case of a reward or compensation made to someone who is particularly apt at inventing objects useful in the manufacture of munitions.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is satisfactory.

Section agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

SALARIES ACT AMENDMENT

PROVISION FOR SALARY OF MINISTER OF MUNITIONS AND SUPPLY

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following proposed resolution:

That it is expedient to amend the Salaries Act to provide that the salary of the Minister of Munitions and Supply shall be \$10,000.

He said: His Excellency the Governor General, having been made acquainted with the subject matter of this resolution, recommends it to the favourable consideration of the house.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Sanderson in the chair.