

5. What authority did he have for this statement?

6. Is it the intention of the Government to allow prominent officials of the Board of Pension Commissioners to take part in such conventions and to suggest to the delegates any plans either for increase of pensions or otherwise?

Hon. Mr. ROWELL:

1. Yes.
- 2, 3 and 4. The Government has no official information on the matter.
5. No authority.
6. The Board of Pension Commissioners was appointed under statute. They have the powers and authority given to them under the statute, and are not under the control of the Government.

#### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS.

Mr. DUFF:

1. What was the number of ships which cleared from Canadian ports during the year 1919 and loaded with Canadian products?
2. What was the number of ships which left the harbour of Portland, Maine, loaded with Canadian products?
3. How many tons of cargo did said ships carry from said Canadian ports and from said American port?

Hon. Mr. BURRELL: With reference to this question there will be no information in the Customs Department except with reference to the last question, No. 3. It can stand as an order for a return.

Mr. MACKIE (Edmonton):

1. What is, or has been, the numerical strength of the staff of the Department of Public Works, by districts, throughout the Dominion of Canada since the 1st of January, 1915, to the 1st of January, 1920?
2. What are the names of the employees?
3. What salary is paid, or was, to each employee of the department during this period?
4. Which of said employees could have been discharged since January, 1917?
5. How many employees in each district can now be dispensed with?
6. What was the expenditure in each said district during the entire period?

#### JOINT DISTRIBUTION OFFICE ORGANIZATION.

Rt. Hon. Sir GEORGE FOSTER (Acting Prime Minister) moved:

That the organization of the officers and clerks of the Joint Distribution of the House of Commons and Senate, submitted to this House on the thirty-first day of March by His Honour the Speaker be approved and confirmed, and that a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their Honours therewith.

Motion agreed to.

#### THE STAFF OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—ORGANIZATION.

On the Order being called:

That the organization of the staff of the House of Commons, as submitted to the House by His Honour the Speaker, on the thirty-first day of March, be approved and confirmed.—Sir George Foster.

Rt. Hon. Sir GEORGE FOSTER (Acting Prime Minister): With reference to this resolution, I understand that it has been the practice to refer a matter of this kind to the Committee of the Whole House, so as to give members an opportunity of easily and familiarly discussing the matter. I propose to adopt that course to-day and to move the House into Committee of the Whole to discuss this resolution. That seems to me better than referring the matter to a special committee, but when we get into Committee of the Whole that question can be taken up and discussed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Inasmuch as there is no notice of the motion for a special committee, such a motion now would require the consent of the House.

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Shelburne and Queen's): There is this advantage in a special committee, that officials who may feel aggrieved, if there are such, and I have no knowledge of it, could appear before that special committee and be heard, whereas in Committee of the Whole that privilege is not open to them. It would seem an obvious convenience to have a small committee appointed before whom any individual who might feel himself aggrieved could appear. I do not see why we should not give the officials this opportunity.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: In Committee of the Whole we shall have the advantage of the statement of Mr. Speaker with reference to the classification, and we can then decide whether or not it would be better to refer the matter to a special committee.

Mr. BELAND: I understand that there is no desire on the part of the leader of the House to refuse the appointment of a committee, the matter being only postponed until we are in committee of the whole.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Exactly.

Mr. BELAND: And then we can offer suggestions.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Yes. I now beg to move:

That the organization of the staff of the House of Commons, as submitted to the House