

On section 2—Federal district commission.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: I should like to move an amendment to this section. I am not sure who will second it.

Mr. MACKENZIE: The leader of the opposition.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: I am going to leave that up to the house. I hope there will be very little difficulty in getting a seconder. I move, in amendment:

That section 3 (1) be amended to read as follows: "Of the members appointed by the governor in council, one shall be ordinarily a resident in each of the nine provinces."

Mr. ST. LAURENT: I have no objection to the object behind the amendment, but I am not sure that it will accomplish what we wish to have done.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Well, put it into good phraseology.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: If the hon. member would allow his amendment to be substituted by the following, perhaps it would be satisfactory. The suggested amendment is as follows:

That section 3 in clause 2 of bill 357 be amended—

(1) By the deletion of the word "fifteen" in paragraph (1) and the substitution of the word "nineteen" therefor;

(2) By the deletion of the word "thirteen" in paragraph (2) and the substitution of the word "seventeen" therefor;

(3) By the deletion of all the words in paragraph (5) after the word "in" in line two and the substitution of the words "each of the nine provinces of Canada" therefor.

This would do what the hon. member wishes to have done, and would bring the other subsections into line with the specific amendment.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Mr. Chairman, with your permission, and through the kindness of the Acting Prime Minister, I should like to move that one instead. My people in the Fraser Valley will be delighted at my legal knowledge.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): I should like to ask one or two questions. First of all, is the hon. member for Fraser Valley sure that the amendment suggested by the Minister of Justice is to the same effect as the one he moved? I would ask the minister also whether there is anything in the section which would preclude the appointment of members of parliament to the commission. It seems to me the hon. member for Fraser Valley would agree that it would be more suitable to have members of parliament, who, after all, are presumably as intelligent and patriotic as any other persons, and who are here in Ottawa part of the year and could serve.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: That very question occurred to me this morning. I asked the Deputy Minister of Justice if there would be anything in the Independence of Parliament Act which would prevent it. Thus far he did not seem to think there would be any obstacle, and it may be convenient to have that done. It has not been done in the past, and I do not think it would be the desire of parliament that the commission be made up entirely of parliamentarians. The question whether or not there would be any obstacle in the Independence of Parliament Act is one I have asked the deputy minister to consider. If there did happen to be something there, it might be proper at another session to bring in an amendment to that act to say that nothing in it would prevent a member of parliament from serving without remuneration on this district commission.

Mr. HAZEN: Does the minister think the words "of the nine" are necessary? Are they not superfluous? Would it not be sufficient to say "in each province of Canada"? We may have ten provinces before long.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: We shall have to do some amending to get another province and at that time we could also make an amendment along that line.

Mr. HAZEN: "Ordinarily resident in each province of Canada" would cover it. How often do the members of this commission meet? How often did they meet in the past?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: In the past there has been ordinarily one meeting a month.

Mr. HAZEN: What are they paid?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: There is no remuneration; they serve without remuneration.

Mr. HAZEN: Should it not be stated in this measure that they shall serve without remuneration?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: It is stated.

Mr. BRACKEN: Before calling it one o'clock, Mr. Chairman, may I compliment the hon. member for New Westminster upon the expedition with which—

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Oh, Fraser Valley—not New Westminster.

Mr. BRACKEN: I meant it as a compliment to the hon. member. But since he has changed his mind as to the number of commissioners I do not know that I can follow him as I would have done before he changed it. I may say that whenever he is right I am glad to follow him. But that occurs so frequently—so infrequently, I should say—

An hon. MEMBER: Make up your mind.