

a resolution somewhat similar to this. My hon. friend the ex-Minister of Finance smiles again. I will tell him that on looking up the Hansard, I find that I did not vote on that occasion. However, I do not intend to hide behind that kind of an alibi. Had I voted I would undoubtedly have voted against the resolution contained in what was then called the Spinney bill. I will be quite frank with the House: I should have voted that way because I mistrusted the Tories. We were on the eve of a general election, and knowing my Tory friends I was under the impression that they would make of this bill an instrument of political corruption. I was not aware at that time that every nook and cranny of the civil service had been filled chock-full, so that not another man could be got into the service anyway. Had they wished to appoint any more they would have had to create new departments and build an annex to nearly all the public buildings.

I want to protest against the feeling which seems to be prevalent throughout the country that politics should be eliminated from politics. We have heard from platforms innumerable that there is too much politics in Canada. Now, as I understand politics, it is the science of government, and politicians are those who devote more or less of their time to looking after the affairs of the public. There has been throughout the country, and more or less on the part of certain hon. gentlemen,—I speak with particular reference to some of my hon. friends directly opposite—a certain amount of desire expressed to do away with politics and politicians, the implication being, I presume, that my hon. friends themselves are not politicians but statesmen. Now, I have no ambitions to reach the unattainable, and in this parliament and in this country I would like to reach what I think I can attain. I think that by considerable study, by hard work, and by paying some attention to the wants of my constituents I may some day be adjudged a good politician. My constituents themselves will no doubt judge whether I am or not, and the results of elections will show whether my ambitions have been attained. But to endeavour to reach a higher category, that of statesman, is I think somewhat more difficult because I know of few statesmen who ever attained to that high grade in the public service until they had passed beyond, and then purely mundane appreciation is not of very much use to them. So, I would ask my hon. friends to be a little more charitable to those of us who are mere politicians; to give us the benefit of the doubt and to imagine that we sometimes try to do our best in the coun-

try's interests; to recognize that the interests of this country are to some extent connected with the interests of the parties which we sometimes uphold; and to feel that there is no great virtue in being the only person to hold an opinion, but that rather one can obtain greater credit by being able to carry out urgent reforms or to work in the best interests of the country, and submerge at times one's own personality and one's more extreme opinions. I ask my hon. friends in all sincerity, and I ask other hon. members also, to give to those of us who are what might be called "party men" the credit for thinking that we are doing our very best in the interests of the country, and that we think the country's interests will not suffer by carrying on a system of party politics.

Now, Sir, in conclusion may I ask hon. members to view this question free from prejudice, to discuss it calmly and quietly and not be carried away by the shibboleths of the moment, such as we have heard, that there should be no party politics, and to discuss with us the question as to whether we would have a more efficient service under which the country's business would be more properly carried on, and whether we are remaining more true to the real spirit of our constitution by keeping the law as it stands at present than by repealing it.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I am sorry that my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen) could not see his way to permit the hon. member for Quebec South (Mr. Power) to present his resolution to the House in the form which most appealed to his mature consideration and best judgment. I think that privilege ought to have been accorded my hon. friend, because it must be apparent from his remarks to which we have just listened that the intention as expressed in the resolution as it stands is different from the intention as it would have been expressed had he been allowed to offer the resolution in the amended form suggested. As the resolution stands it is a motion for the abolition of the Civil Service Act. I need hardly say that in that form his motion would not be acceptable to the government. I think it would be a great mistake to repeal the Civil Service Act. The Civil Service Commission, of course, is the main feature of the act and, I imagine, the one to which attention is being particularly directed. On the other hand I should like to associate myself with my hon. friend in much that he said about the importance of maintaining ministerial responsibility, and having government by a respon-