

State. I said that it was absurd to say that would be a satisfactory provision. That is what I meant. When one takes the ground that a clergyman or the officers of a church might be liable under this measure because the organization not being registered some money was being solicited for the Red Cross work or for the Patriotic Fund or for any other work connected with the war, is it not absurd to say that no harm would be done because such persons could not be prosecuted without the consent of the Secretary of State? Under such circumstances a clergyman or the officers of the church might be liable to a fine not exceeding \$500 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding three months. In other words, the man would become a criminal under the statute, but he could not be prosecuted without the consent of the Secretary of State. That would be an unenviable position in which to place a clergyman or an officer of a church who sought to do his part in regard to the collection of contributions for war purposes. I do not hesitate to repeat what I said, namely, that the Bill has not been properly drafted to meet the evil which it has been suggested is the reason for it. The Minister of Finance when he first spoke on the Bill, said that it was not intended to include churches—

Sir THOMAS WHITE: That is my view.

Mr. PUGSLEY: —because, he said, a church was not an institution. Yet when we come to section 3 of the Bill, we find that the work a church may do without being registered is limited to one thing, that is to say, money may be collected at Divine service in a place of public worship and the church would not be liable because it was not registered, but all other war charity work which its members may carry on would be illegal and would render the clergymen and officers of the church liable to a penalty of \$500 or imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding three months. That shows very clearly, no matter what the Minister of Finance may think, that the draughtsman had in mind that a church would be an institution within the meaning of paragraph (b) of section 2. That is absolutely clear by virtue of the limitation contained in section 3.

Mr. NICKLE: It was only a day or two ago that I was speaking to one of the leading representatives of the Great War Veterans Association, and he was urging upon me that steps should be taken by this House

[Mr. Pugsley.]

to pass some Bill along the line of the measure now under consideration. He said that certain people throughout this country were taking advantages of the sympathies the people had with returned soldiers to make collections under the guise or allegation that the money was to be spent on behalf of the men who had returned or who had been injured. He urged that steps should be taken immediately to prevent what he thought was a growing grievance. There are none of us who are not aware of the fact that from one end of the country to the other, there has been a great deal of money very unwisely collected, although I must readily admit that the spontaneous response of the people to requests that merit consideration has been most commendable. If I understand the object of this Bill, it does not purport to deal with collections on behalf of what one might call war purposes; it simply deals with collections for charitable purposes. It does not include collections for field kitchens or machine guns for our troops.

Mr. MACDONALD: Why should it not?

Mr. NICKLE: The object of this Bill is to deal with war charities or war benevolence; it in no way deals with the collection of money for war purposes. I do not think my hon. friend opposite is sincere in his objection that under this Bill any honest person who collects without having the authority stipulated for in this Bill would be considered a criminal. Surely, if some minister, in his zeal, but without knowledge of this Bill assuming that it should become law, were to institute a collection, no one for a moment would think of considering him a criminal.

Mr. MACDONALD: Suppose a minister started a fund and he has certain members in his congregation who did not approve of it—that has often occurred and more hostility is aroused in churches that way than in anything else—an opportunity might be given to malcontents to have the minister prosecuted.

Mr. NICKLE: If my hon. friend were the Secretary of State he would say there should be no prosecution.

Mr. MACDONALD: At the same time the church would be torn asunder on the question as to whether the minister were guilty or innocent.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Should a man's guilt or innocence depend on the whim of the Secretary of State?