

Mr. CAHAN: I am not responsible for the report. Experts for every other department are selected by the civil service commission upon the report and advice of departmental officers. The Gibb report suggests that this should be under a minister and not under a department. What the report had in view undoubtedly was the creation of a distinct department or bureau or board which would supervise the administration and which would be under the minister. I shall be prepared to come back at the end of three years and discuss with the hon. gentleman whether this system of patronage which he is introducing advances the best interests of the government and the public.

Mr. HOWE: The board we are creating is exactly the one described by Sir Alexander Gibb in his report. Sir Alexander said that the board should report to the minister and not through a deputy minister. This board, as I say, is exactly the same as the one described by Sir Alexander Gibb and the matter of rates, salaries, terms of service and so on will be the same as Sir Alexander Gibb recommended. As my hon. friend has claimed the Gibb report for his party, it seems to me that that rather closes the issue.

Mr. CAHAN: My hon. friend need not be so personal; I did not claim the Gibb report for my party or any party. We are more interested in the proper administration of these harbour boards.

Mr. HOWE: My hon. friend paid me a compliment by saying that I was aspiring to be prime minister of Canada.

Mr. CAHAN: I did not suggest that the hon. gentleman was aspiring to that position; I suggested that the argument which he was advancing would tend to vest in the prime minister the appointment of all officials and employees in every grade of the service.

Mr. ST-PERE: I do not think we would be the losers by that.

Mr. CAHAN: Possibly not, although there is a widespread difference of opinion. That sort of patronage has led to evil results; it is a pernicious practice.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order. This bill refers to the Minister of Transport, but there is no Minister of Transport. Item 24 on the order paper refers to a resolution to provide for the appointment of a Minister of Transport, but that resolution and the following bill should first be passed. It is only after the principle has been agreed to that the accessory can be discussed in committee. At the present time

[Mr. Howe.]

the Minister of Transport does not exist and we are being asked to transfer the whole harbour commission business to a department at present non-existent. I am very much surprised that such an eminent lawyer as the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Cahan) has not seen this before.

Mr. CAHAN: I took exception to it last evening.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Exception was taken to this particular point, I believe, by the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George, but I do not think the point is well taken. The last section of this bill states that it will come into force only on proclamation of the governor in council and the resolution referred to by the hon. member will be law long before this bill is proclaimed. The definition of "minister" as the Minister of Transport does not affect the validity of this bill.

Mr. CAHAN: My hon. friend should not make such a confident declaration, as this bill cannot be enacted and proclaimed without the confirmation of another branch of this parliament.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): This bill will not become law until proclaimed.

Mr. CAHAN: That is true.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): There is every possible safeguard.

Mr. POULIOT: I was interrupted just as I was making my point. Has the chair given a ruling on the matter or has the objection been withdrawn? I should like to have a ruling. I do not want to displease anyone, but I want to see good legislation. Our legislation should be one and two and number two should not be number one. It seems to me that everyone will agree with that. I do not want to cause trouble to anyone, but I want to be clear in my mind that the legislation we are discussing is right. This is a serious objection. Perhaps the reason why this resolution has not been passed is because the government have changed their mind. Perhaps the bill we are now studying will never be put into force because the resolution will not be submitted to the committee. We do not know this and I want to be sure. It seems to me that we should first create a department before it is given any power, especially such powers as are granted by this legislation. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that it will be very difficult for you to elucidate this matter and give a ruling on the whole thing.