

never heard any complaint about that practice before.

Mr. MURPHY. The motion, as it reached me, is somewhat wider in its terms than the notice given by the hon. member to a gentleman on this side of the House who transmitted it to me. But, be that as it may, let us look at the motion of the hon. gentleman and consider it for a few moments. In the first paragraph the hon. gentleman proposes 'that a Royal Commission be appointed to make inquiry into the management of the Printing Bureau for such time past as the commissioners may consider in the public interest.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, the inquiry which has been conducted into the management of the Printing Bureau covers about twenty-five years, and the motion made by my hon. friend, as well as his speech in support of it, totally ignore both the period of time covered by that investigation and the report made as a result of it, so far as the findings of that report are directed to correct the abuses that were discovered during the course of the investigation. The first paragraph of this motion proceeds: 'With instructions to inquire fully into the causes of the want of system therein.' Why, Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what has been done; that is precisely the work I and the experts whom I engaged to assist me put in a great many months at doing; and the result of that work is spread upon the pages of this report which has been before parliament and the country since last November. Then, this paragraph further proceeds: 'And to report who is to blame therefore, and what safeguards are to be provided to protect the country for the future.' Mr. Speaker, all of that has been done in the most minute detail. A great deal of that detail is set forth in the report which was presented to parliament in November last; and for his own purposes my hon. friend chooses to ignore that report and the work which it indicates was done before the report was in shape to present to parliament. In fact, the motion of the hon. gentleman, and the speech which he has made in support of it, go to the extent of treating the report and the investigation as two things that never happened. Now, it is taxing the credulity of this House and carrying absurdity to its extremest length to ask the House to accept any such proposition as that which the hon. gentleman lays before it in this motion.

The second paragraph of the motion begins in these terms: 'And that said commissioners be further instructed to investigate how far other departments have violated the law by usurping the powers of the Printing Bureau in the matter of printing.' Now, Mr. Speaker,

as a matter of fact, the powers of the Printing Bureau were not usurped by other departments; but when printing was done through other departments, the reason for that printing having been done under the direction of another department rather than under that of the Printing Bureau was elicited in the course of the investigation, and appropriate remedies were applied to prevent that being done in the future. So that, as in the case of the first paragraph, this clause in the second is absolutely unnecessary, because it deals with matters which have been thoroughly investigated. This paragraph proceeds further: 'Or by sending in requisitions for supplies in contravention of the statute and regulations in that behalf.' Here again, a full investigation has been made, and where any irregularity has been found to exist with regard to these requisitions, that irregularity has been promptly stopped. Now, Sir, let me point out to you and to the House that this second paragraph of the hon. gentleman's motion covers the most ordinary matters of every-day departmental routine. To adopt this paragraph, I submit, would be to establish a precedent whereby parliament would be substituted for all the departments. Governmental responsibility would cease—

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). And time it did.

Mr. MURPHY. My hon. friend from Leeds says it is time it did. I would just say that the country has a different opinion, and that is the reason my hon. friend is on that side of the House and we are on this side. I was proceeding to say that governmental responsibility would cease and legislation would be rendered impossible by the mass of detail which is now looked after by the several departments, and which would inevitably be transferred to parliament if the principle laid down in this second paragraph of the hon. gentleman's motion were once adopted. Briefly—and I desire in this respect to follow the example set by the hon. gentleman, as far as it is possible for me to do so—let me say that in my judgment this motion should be rejected for the very simple reason that the affairs of the Printing Bureau have been investigated, not once, but twice—first, by the responsible minister who is charged with that duty, and, secondly, by our hon. friends opposite in the Public Accounts Committee. It is true, that the investigation conducted by our hon. friends in the Public Accounts Committee was abandoned. Of late hon. gentlemen opposite have manifested a strange desire to abandon in the committee investigations for which they have pressed in this House; but in this particular instance the fact that they did choose to abandon the investiga-