

*Employment Commission*

Mr. CAHAN: I do not wish to split hairs in this discussion, but the relief acts were voted from time to time by parliament, and parliament gave such authorization as was vested in the governor in council. The bill in respect to each of the relief acts was as broad on the one hand and as limited on the other as in the present case. Under this bill there is no limit to the power of the governor in council in dealing with every incident in relation to this national commission. This bill does little more than give a name to a so-called national employment commission. Once the commission is named all its administrative powers are regulated and controlled by regulations and orders in council; all its expenditures are controlled by orders in council.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No.

Mr. CAHAN: It is quite clear. Look at section 7.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: When there is a supplementary supply bill introduced the house will be asked to vote a specific sum. It did not have so to do under the government of my hon. friend.

Mr. CAHAN: All the expenditures that were then made were submitted to parliament from time to time, and parliament had ample opportunity from time to time to discuss and criticize the expenditures which were made in strict conformity with the statute. I hear a great deal of discussion now as to those expenditures. I heard the right hon. gentleman's speech on Friday last. Neither the right hon. gentleman nor those associated with him undertook to criticize those expenditures as made from time to time. Further may I say I regretted to hear the criticisms made by the right hon. gentleman of the work of the former Minister of Labour. I can simply say from my experience that I know no member of the government who administered his department with less ostentation and less seeking of publicity, and none who administered his department with greater efficiency than did Mr. Gordon as Minister of Labour.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: He gave parliament less information.

Mr. CAHAN: Parliament could obtain all the information it asked for. But I will say, without attempting any personal criticism, that I am sure if the Prime Minister to-day were Minister of Labour and had the opportunity, as the Minister of Labour has had for several months, to go through all the work that was done under Mr. Gordon's

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

administration, he would not have made the sharp criticism which he did on Friday last, because I am convinced that the Minister of Labour or anyone associated with him who will look into the vast volume of administrative work carried on by Mr. Gordon must give him credit for very great efficiency.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I made no criticism the other evening which I did not make from the other side of the house and to the former Minister of Labour when he was in the house. I was very careful to restrict what I said about the lack of information to what I had said in Mr. Gordon's presence, and I did not bring in his name either.

Mr. CAHAN: The reference was to the former minister of labour and could refer only to him.

Mr. POULIOT: Let the dead bury their dead.

Mr. CAHAN: I should think the hon. member should attend the funeral at once.

Mr. POULIOT: I will be a pall bearer. On this side we were all pall bearers at the funeral of the Tory party on October 14.

Mr. CAHAN: My hon. friend does not expect me to reply to these nonsensical statements. I simply make one more suggestion, and that is that these administrative orders which apply to the administration of these funds, and which as the right hon. gentleman says are in a measure legislative enactments, should be published in the official gazette and have the force of law only when they are so published. These orders in council are of a different kind from many others: they are the permanent law governing administration by the commission exactly the same as orders in council with respect to the administration of the bureau of public printing, and exactly as orders in council with regard to the administration of copyrights and patents become the permanent law. These are all published in the Canada Gazette before they become law, and they have no force or effect until so published. I think that suggestion might well be considered.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think that suggestion ought to have been made by my hon. friend to his colleagues during the five years he sat in the government. That should have been done with respect to the orders in council passed by the then administration, not only in relation to one measure respecting employment and relief such as this, but as respects all the measures. My hon. friend may have made the suggestion, but evidently