

Commission. As a matter of fact two of the commissioners were formerly members of this House and my personal friends; but I do object to the act, and I think a committee should be appointed to investigate not only the making of appointments but the principles governing promotions, transfers, etc.

In the debate last year my hon. friend, the former leader of the Progressive party (Mr. Crerar)—and I sincerely hope he will soon be in his seat again—made it very plain that he was against political patronage. After stating that the Civil Service Commission should be entrusted with the duty and responsibility of seeing that any person coming into the service possessed the necessary qualifications, he went on to say:

But after that is done it seems to me that on the whole we would perhaps get better results if ministers and deputy ministers in charge of the various departments had greater latitude in control of the services than they have at the present time. If a minister or a deputy minister in a department wishes to promote some one in his department, if he wishes to transfer him from one branch of his department to another, that should certainly rest in his hands.

In other words, the responsibility of administration should rest with the minister or his deputy and not with the commission. My hon. friend continued on the same lines as regards the right of appeal from the decision of a deputy minister. While I believe that the administration should absolutely be in the hands of the minister or the deputy minister or of the heads of branches, I would still leave to the individual civil servant the right of appeal, but not to the Civil Service Commission. Rather I would propose the adoption of the practice followed in Australia and New Zealand. I would have a civil service judge, equivalent to a judge of the Exchequer Court, a man of the highest character, to deal with appeals. I would further protect the civil servant by introducing in the various departments what the civil service organizations have asked for, namely, Whitley Councils in each department and inter-departmental councils. Then any civil servant who feels aggrieved in regard to promotion or otherwise submits his grievances to his fellow civil servants composing the council, and if they think he has a just case against the head of his branch or against his deputy minister they take it before the judge.

Frankly, I want to see the most efficient and the most satisfied Civil Service that we can have, and I believe that it is the honest intent of every hon. member, but if the bogey of political patronage is to be trotted out every time any attempt is made to correct what we believe to be faulty in the act, then we might as well not attempt any improve-

ment. I think my hon. friend and colleague, (Mr. Chevrier) made out a splendid case, and I strongly support the question being taken up by a committee. Let us try to make progress. There are other very serious questions in connection with the Civil Service that later on can be taken up, but in the meantime the law governing the Civil Service Commission needs amending. Mr. Speaker, I shall have much pleasure in voting to have this matter referred to a committee.

Mr. HERMAS DESLAURIERS (Sainte-Marie) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I deem it my duty to strongly support the motion proposed by my hon. colleague of Quebec South (Mr. Power). Those were precisely my sentiments last year, and I have no fear to state this evening that my views have not since changed. I wish to congratulate the member for Quebec South on the initiative, courage and talent which he displayed in asserting his contention. This act, as draughted and applied, of which he urges the repeal, is certainly an arbitrary and unconstitutional measure. Such legislation belongs to ancient history, and to find its parallel, one must go back almost a hundred years, when the governors of Canada, at the helm of public affairs, ruled through an executive power irresponsible to the people and also had the privilege of voting themselves salaries and dividing among themselves the public funds. This kind of administration brought on those times of crises of which history still vividly reminds us. During that period we witnessed individuals living in London, rendering no services to Canada, not having even set foot in this country, drawing fabulous salaries. As the same thing is happening here, at present, although on a smaller scale, I shall have the opportunity in the course of my remarks, to ask the Civil Service Commission, who has the care of watching over the interests of the country, why they are paying out salaries to persons who are not even in the country's service. Those powers conferred on the Civil Service Commission, remind us of the times when the country was governed by a group of friends or a Family Compact. At the time, a few persons were allowed to distribute all public offices amongst friends and relatives, claiming salaries to their hearts' content without any compunction, exactly as the thing is practised to-day. This I stated and proved last year, on the floor of this House.

Of all these independent commissions, the Civil Service Commission is certainly the most arbitrary and unconstitutional, owing to its extensive powers. However, the principle which places the administration of the country un-