

that he is utterly incapable of performing his duties. He may be guilty of some crime in the administration of his office. In such cases the responsible head of the department located in such remote district certainly should have the right temporarily to suspend and to report to the deputy head. It is a mere suspension. If the commission should decide that the suspension was not justified the man would be paid his full time and returned to office and to the performance of his duties. The fact is that in the administration of any department of business affairs I should not care to be administering in a remote district unless I had at least the right to suspend officers who were incompetent, inefficient, guilty of mal-administration or misconduct. It is simply a right temporarily to suspend.

Mr. NEILL: The minister has said that the man who is suspended will suffer no wrong because the Civil Service Commission will see to it that suspension is removed and that he is paid in full if such suspension were not justified. But here is the situation: After all, men are human and liable to frailties. Under some of the circumstances enumerated a moment ago a man on the impulse of the moment or in a temper may suspend a subordinate. Having reported the suspension, human nature would be opposed to the admission, "I spoke too quickly, and I am sorry." He will not do that. It is up to the official to try to justify the suspension. He will do it, and stress every effort within his ability or facilities to make the suspension permanent, despite the fact that the dismissal was made too rashly or too quickly.

Will the minister tell us any instance where the public service of Canada has been prejudiced and any loss sustained by the government through the lack of this section? I should like to hear one instance.

Mr. CAHAN: Mr. Chairman, I have not such a poor opinion of human nature as my hon. friend. For many years I have employed men—very rough men—some 10,000 to 20,000 of them, when nearly every man carried a revolver and sometimes shot at sight. However their foremen always had a sense of justice, and although they might do things in anger they were not likely, when in cold blood they reviewed the circumstances, to misrepresent their own motives or the facts. I have confidence in the officials in charge of departments in remote districts. If they give way to anger and improperly or unjustly suspend men they will not endeavour to misrepresent the facts to the commission or the head office. However if they should do so

there would be thorough and competent inquiries and in the end justice would be done. I think that a man in a remote district, who has a dozen or a hundred men under him, especially when they have little or no communication during certain seasons of the year with the outside world, should have the right of suspension for misconduct or inefficiency. Otherwise there could not be proper administration of any branch of any department.

Mr. NEILL: From the minister's remarks I gather that I would be justified in advising subordinates to carry revolvers and to shoot at sight.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): The minister has referred to the centre of administration. Was he referring to Ottawa or to the nearest office of the particular department in question?

Mr. CAHAN: Under section 51 in every instance the head of the department is the head officer at Ottawa. For the information of hon. members I shall read section 51:

51. The head of a department, and in his absence the deputy head, may

(a) suspend from the performance of his duty any officer, clerk or employee guilty of misconduct or negligence in the performance of his duties;

(b) remove such suspension; but no person shall receive any salary or pay for the time or any part of the time during which he was under suspension unless the commission is of opinion that such suspension was unjust or made in error or that the punishment inflicted was too severe.

2. All cases of suspension, with the reasons therefor, shall be reported in writing by the deputy head to the commission.

It must be a report by the deputy head of the department to the commission sitting at Ottawa, who have the final determination and disposition of the matter.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): In answer to my question regarding a definition of remote places the minister said that a remote place was any place removed a great distance from the centre of administration. Now he says the centre of administration is Ottawa. In my view the city of Vancouver would be removed a great distance from Ottawa. Would this legislation give power to officials in Vancouver to discharge or suspend minor officials?

Mr. GUTHRIE: No.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Does it?

Mr. GUTHRIE: No.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Let me say to my hon. friend from Bow River that we had in mind cases of a temporary character such as I mentioned a moment ago, an expedition, a