

*National Harbours Board*

Mr. HOWE: I do not believe that that is so, because I must point out that the board is dealing in millions of dollars, and has a revenue of about eight million dollars per year, plus such deficiency appropriation as parliament may vote.

Subsection 3 agreed to.

Section 3, subsection 4 agreed to.

On section 3, subsection 5—Salaries.

Mr. CAHAN: If the salaries of the board are to be fixed by the governor in council should they be left indefinite and subject to change by increases or decreases? I am not objecting to the subsection, but certainly I suggest that the salaries should be fixed in the bill.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: If the government is bound to pass the subsection we cannot prevent it, but I must remind the government that during the five years the previous government held office the present Prime Minister and his followers in opposition offered continuous criticism of action by order in council and without reference to parliament. I admit that there may be occasions when a salary cannot be stated in a bill, in which event the amount would have to be determined by the government, after taking all facts into consideration, but it does not seem to me that this is in that class. I assume the government must know at this time the persons they purpose appointing to the board, and they ought to be able to state the salaries in the bill. I submit that from the government's own point of view regarding orders in council this is something that ought to be determined here. If everything is to be left to be settled by order in council, what becomes of all the arguments hon. gentlemen opposite used during the last few years against the previous government?

Mr. HOWE: The harbour commission is in business in a very big way indeed, and we hope to secure the services of excellent men for the commission. We believe we should be free to pay what may be necessary in order to get the right type of man from time to time. I am advised by the Department of Justice that this is the usual procedure in matters of this kind, and I see no reason why it should be departed from in this case. My hon. friend is quite mistaken in saying that the government knows exactly how this board is going to be made up, because we cannot consider that until we get the legislation through.

Subsection agreed to.

Subsections 6 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

[Mr. Cahan.]

On section 3, subsection 10—In case of vacancy.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I move, Mr. Chairman, that this subsection be amended by striking out the words in the first line thereof, "there should be" and substituting in lieu thereof the word "of."

Amendment agreed to.

Subsection as amended agreed to.

Subsections 11 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Section agreed to.

On section 4—Officers, clerks and employees.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I move to amend subsection 1 by adding at the end thereof the following proviso:

Provided that in the employment of such officers, clerks and employees under the provisions of this subsection, other qualifications being equal, preference shall be given to persons who have been on active service overseas in the military forces, or being resident or domiciled in Canada at the outbreak of the war served in His Majesty's forces, or who have served on the high seas in a seagoing ship of war in the naval forces of His Majesty during the war, and who have left any of such services with an honourable record or who have been honourably discharged.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CAHAN: Before the clause as amended is carried I wish to consider the first four lines of section 4. When this board is organized and vested with the property and works of the seven existing harbour commissions it will be, next to the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway, the third largest national corporation in the Dominion of Canada. Its employment will at times run into many scores and hundreds of employees who will really be in the service of the government of Canada, just as much in the service of the Dominion of Canada as the five hundred employees of the printing bureau under the Department of the Secretary of State which in itself is a separate and independent bureau or board but is nevertheless a branch of one of the departments of government just as this board inevitably will be one of the branches of a department of government. This bill provides that the three gentlemen who are appointed commissioners shall have complete control of the employment of all other officers, clerks and employees which they may deem necessary for the proper conduct of its business. This board will fix their remuneration and other terms of their employment, and I suggest that if the former system led to patronage and improper admin-