

friend must know as well as I do that by the very nature of things they cannot defend themselves in this house. I say that when a charge is being made that these people—

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: On a point of order, the hon. member made no charge at all.

Mr. MITCHELL: It was stated that a permanent official had been given a gift by Japanese; that is not a correct statement to make.

Mr. REID: I did not say they were; I said they had been, and that is a different matter. I am speaking of the past.

There are one or two other matters I should like to mention. Possibly the minister or his assistant would take note of my questions, so that he may answer them. The first matter I have in mind is in connection with the personnel of the British Columbia security commission. A return was brought down on February 15, and in that return a total staff of 115 was shown. There were twenty-eight stenographers, twenty of whom were in the Vancouver office; nineteen clerks, sixteen of whom were in the Vancouver office; and fifty-three of a staff in that office, making a total of 115 in all. My first question is: Why should there be an office in a town like Port Arthur? There is a man there receiving a salary of \$2,400, and a stenographer receiving \$720.

Before he answers that question, I should like to ask some questions with regard to the appointment of this staff. The information given me is that the staff was appointed by Mr. Austin Taylor, chairman of the security commission. No great objection was raised to that, because it was understood that by the order in council complete power and authority was given to the British Columbia security commission to appoint its staff.

I wish, however, to ask the minister this question: Who was responsible later on for advising the civil service commission to place all these positions under the civil service, and practically protect every one of these under the civil service regulations, when the only qualification many of them had for the job, or the chief qualification, was being a friend of Mr. Taylor?

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Professor Angus, too.

Mr. REID: We have heard a great deal about political patronage. If the government appointed, or dared to appoint one man outside the civil service commission, I can imagine the cry which would be raised in this house. But here are 118 of them. If one of them retired from the position, that position would have

[Mr. Mitchell.]

to be advertised through the medium of the civil service commission. It is a splendid thing to have appointments made through the civil service commission, but I should like to know who advised the civil service commission to have all these appointees placed under it. As I say, with respect to many, if not all of them, the chief qualification was their relationship to the chairman of the security commission.

That is one thing I want to know. I want to know all the facts about the office at Port Arthur, and the need for it. I want to know the need for a staff of 115. I want to know, also, what Mr. Trueman, the placement officer, is doing, and especially after the statement he made publicly that the reason why the Japanese were being moved by the government was that there was mass hysteria, and the political agitation of some members of parliament.

Perhaps I had better permit the minister to answer those questions, or would he rather I should ask the remaining questions?

Mr. MITCHELL: I shall answer one at a time. The first question, as I understand it, is this: Why were employees of the British Columbia security commission placed under the civil service commission?

Mr. REID: After their appointment.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes, after their appointment. If my hon. friend's mind will go back to the development of this Japanese problem in British Columbia twelve months ago, and the establishment of the British Columbia security commission, he will know as well as I do that as soon as it was handed over to a department of government—and it was handed over to my department—we moved with expedition. The first appointments were made by Austin Taylor and his commission. Eventually the civil service commission went into the matter, and they were finally approved by it. I believe that is the first question. If there is any responsibility I am prepared to take it, for the civil service commission.

Mr. NEILL: Let us go back farther: Who appointed Mr. Taylor?

Mr. MITCHELL: The government did.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Who made the recommendation?

Mr. MITCHELL: The government appointed Mr. Taylor. I do not think my hon. friend made the recommendation.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: I certainly did not. I come from British Columbia.