

the matter, unless some other action is taken by this House. But I do not see why this Debates Committee, entrusted by this House at the opening of the session with the supervision of the official report of the debates, should be treated in this way. If so, there will be only one thing to be done, and that is for every member of the Debates Committee to hand in his resignation. We are making the recommendation; that is all. We are simply making a recommendation, which we thought the Civil Service Commission might accept or ignore.

Mr. SPROULE. To settle the question, I rise to a point of order. I ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, if this motion is in order in the face of the law.

Mr. ETHIER. Although I am a member of the Debates Committee, I was not present when that recommendation was adopted, and I think the committee has not taken the proper step to obtain the appointment of a translator. I understand that the translators of the debates are governed by the Civil Service Act and that they are under the control and authority of the Speaker as head of the Department of the House of Commons. According to the Civil Service Act, I understand that the head of the department, on the certificate of the deputy head, who in this case is the clerk of the House, may ask the Civil Service Commission to appoint such an officer, and, thereupon the Civil Service Commission has power to appoint him, and this in accordance with section 21 of the Civil Service Act amendment, with or without examination. I have no doubt that Mr. Desaulniers who has passed the required examination before the Civil Service Act was in force, if appointed, would fulfil the duties of the position satisfactorily. But I do not think the proper course under the Civil Service Act is for the Debates Committee to recommend the appointment of such an officer. I think this is a case in which the Civil Service Act must apply.

Mr. FIELDING. Might I suggest that instead of asking for the ruling of Mr. Speaker, we might accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Hughes), that, if there be a doubt as to the legal interpretation of the Act, we endeavour to have that doubt removed by obtaining the opinion of the Department of Justice. Happily, there is no difference of opinion as to the man recommended. The understanding, however, is that the House has agreed to permit its officers to be treated in the same way as officers of the Civil Service; and in the case of a technical officer to be appointed under the Civil Service Act, the commission would have to be satisfied that he was qualified, and that the nature of his services came

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within the scope of the class to which it was proposed to appoint him. Applying that rule to this case, it is suggested that the Civil Service Commission must deal with this application.

Mr. HUGHES. Under the law, how could the matter be brought before the Civil Service Commission? We must look at that commission through smoked glasses.

Mr. FIELDING. I do not wish to interpret the law, but rather to act upon my hon. friend's own suggestion. This same question may come up again, and it is as well that we should have a clear understanding of the application of the new Civil Service Act to the officers of the House of Commons. I would therefore suggest that my hon. friend do not press his motion today; and as we all have the same object in view, every good end will be served by adopting the suggestion which has been made.

Mr. GERVAIS. Acting on the suggestion of the Minister of Finance, I beg leave to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. FIELDING. Let the motion stand for another day.

Mr. GERVAIS. Let it stand for another day.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Wherever in one of the departments an officer is to be appointed by order in council, similarly, an officer of this House; but as an order in council can only appoint a person who has been recommended by the Civil Service Commission, so this House can only appoint one similarly recommended. I do not know anything about the action of the committee. In one sense it may be all right, but still I think it is extremely desirable that the provisions of the law should be observed, and I concur entirely in the view expressed by the Minister of Finance that the opinion of the law officers of the Crown or of some legal authority should be obtained for the guidance of the House.

Mr. SPROULE. I take it that that opinion will be communicated to the House when it is obtained.

Mr. FIELDING. The clerk of the House will comply with the wish of the House in that respect.

Motion withdrawn.

GAS INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. WM. TEMPLEMAN moved for leave to introduce Bill (No. 132) to amend the Gas Inspection Act. He said: The most important amendment is in section 3. Under the present law there is a percentage of allowance made for errors in the inspection of meters. That percentage is reduced,