

PROCEEDINGS AND MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

COMMITTEE ROOM 435,

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

TUESDAY, April 4, 1922.

The Special Committee appointed to consider questions relating to the Pensions, Insurance and Re-establishment of Returned Soldiers, and any amendments to the existing laws in relation thereto which may be proposed or considered necessary by the Committee met at eleven o'clock a.m.

Members present: Messrs. Black (Yukon), Brown, Caldwell, Carroll, Chisholm, Forrester, Hudson, Humphrey, McKay (Renfrew N.), Marler, Maclaren, Munro, Raymond, Robinson, Ross (Kingston), Pelletier, Speakman, Turgeon and Wallace.—19.

Mr. CARROLL: I beg to move that Mr. Marler, the honourable member for St. Lawrence-St. George, be Chairman of this Committee for the present session.

Dr. CHISHOLM: I second that motion.

The CLERK: There being no other nominations, I declare Mr. Marler duly elected Chairman of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, my first words should, no doubt, express thanks to you for the confidence which you have reposed in me by appointing me Chairman of this very important Committee. I hardly know whether it is an appointment upon which I am to be congratulated, because I understand there is a tremendous amount of work to be done. I feel, however, quite confident that all the work we have to do will be accomplished very speedily and very effectively and in a pleasurable manner. I would like to make it abundantly clear to every member of this Committee at the outset that the mere fact that I have been appointed your Chairman will in no way permit me to feel that I am superior to you, or that I have the right to impose upon any member of this Committee my ideas or my will. During the whole course of my business career I have always felt that the proper function of a chairman or head of any business is to encourage people to work with him rather than under him. I therefore hope that during the progress of our deliberations you will always feel at liberty to express your views freely and frankly on all pertinent subjects, with the assurance that those views will receive earnest consideration by this Committee before being submitted to Parliament.

There is one fact which I think should be kept in mind, and it is that this Committee is not of a political character. We are assembled here for the purpose of assisting the returned soldiers to the fullest possible extent, and the views of any political party will not affect our deliberations in the slightest degree. Those views jointly will be the views of this Committee as a whole, and will be submitted to Parliament as such.

I am very well aware, gentlemen, that there have been very prominent men appointed to the Chairmanship of this Committee in the past. The Hon. Mr. Hazen was the first Chairman. He was followed by Sir Herbert Ames, and then Mr. Rowell, Mr. Calder, and the immediate past Chairman, Mr. Cronyn, successively occupied this position. I am fully aware that I have a very difficult task to perform in endeavouring to carry on the work in the able manner displayed by my predecessors. But I shall do so to the very best of my ability with your assistance.

We are exceedingly fortunate in having with us Mr. Cloutier, the Secretary of this Committee. He understands the situation very thoroughly, and his explanations to me thus far have been exceedingly clear and helpful, and I am confident that his explanations in the future will be of inestimable value.

You are fully aware of the reason for appointing committees. They arise from the usual conventions of Parliament which have for their object the consideration of various questions with the utmost exactitude, so that the time of Parliament itself