

APPENDIX No. 6

Q. And not illness?—A. No, although I think possibly there is more illness, especially amongst the female staff, than there would be in my experience in business.

Q. This is a comparatively new department in that portion of the service which has been running on from year to year for many years. We all understand that it is difficult to have just as good service as if you were organizing anew. Your department is new, and you should have young people, comparatively, and capable people. Why have you not?—A. I would not have you infer from what I have said that our people are all incapables. We have good, bad and indifferent, of course. I do not know whether it is permissible, but my late chief felt he could not secure the efficiency that should be provided when we were put under the Civil Service Commission.

Q. He felt that there was greater efficiency before you went under the Civil Service Commission?—A. Yes. Is it permissible to discuss Commander Ross?

Q. Yes, go on.—A. When Commander Ross came here in the first instance, his story is that he had been promised that he was to have an absolutely free hand to run the organization along business lines as he considered necessary. When he was in England, in December, 1917—February, 1917—he received word that, by the passing of an order in council, he had come under the working of the Civil Service Act, and he immediately cabled to the Premier protesting very strongly.

Q. You said February, 1917, is that correct?—A. February, 1918, he went over in December, 1917. But the Government did not consider that it could make an exception to our department, and the commander left. He wrote one or two strong letters stating that he considered our efficiency was going down $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per month.

Q. Because of the action of the Civil Service regulations?—A. Yes.

Q. In the first place the head of the department had the right to hire and dismiss?—A. Or the deputy. The Commissioners themselves hired and dismissed.

Q. And having that power they were able to secure better efficiency?—A. Yes.

Q. Than they have been able to secure since?—A. The Pension Commissioners used to send a representative, sometimes, as far as Halifax or Vancouver, to get the proper type of staff, that is the subordinate staff, stenographers, typists, and all that sort of thing. As a result of that there was a feeling abroad that our salaries were higher than they should be—but I have heard a statement—

By the Chairman:

Q. Before you enter on the question of salaries let us finish up the question of greater efficiency. Are there any other reasons you can give, in addition to what you have already said, as to why efficiency was greater under the old methods?—A. I do not know whether I am right in this, but there appears to be a feeling that under the Civil Service regulations we have not the hold over the staff we had before.

By Mr. Charters:

Q. When you require a certain number of clerks you apply to the Commission?—A. We notify the Civil Service Commission that we have vacancies for so many clerks and say "Will you appoint them," specifying what we want in the way of typists, stenographers, or ledgerkeepers as the case may be. We are asked to give a trial to those who are sent to us, and it is rather difficult sometimes to tie the Civil Service Commission down, and I expect they find difficulty in that respect also, and I have asked them how long am I expected to keep a person whom I consider unsatisfactory.

Q. What is the answer?—A. I have never got anything very tangible. I must give them a fair trial. You know very often you can tell in a very short time whether a person is satisfactory or not.

Q. And have you dismissed many or refused to engage any member?—A. Not a very large number.

Q. Why?—A. Well that too is rather difficult; because when we have done so we have not seen any great improvement in the replacements.

[Major Stanley B. Coristine.]