

Employment in Public Service

working genuinely in the interest of all veterans. I think the house is satisfied with the concept of veterans preference but my view is that the system may well not be working now as was intended I think the commission should confer with the Royal Canadian Legion and that the question should be considered at some time in a future session by the standing committee on veterans affairs.

Mr. Herridge: I wish to support the view just advanced by the hon. member for Carleton. I think it very necessary that we follow his suggestion in view of changing circumstances and conditions today. I trust there will be consultation between the commission and representatives of veterans organizations with respect to the application of this clause.

Mr. Benson: I should like to assure hon. members that the government is most interested in seeing the veterans preference work in the way in which it was originally intended and I have been assured by the chairman of the Civil Service Commission, who is the chairman of the new Public Service Commission, that he will be pleased to meet with leaders of the veterans organizations sometime in the near future to discuss this particular matter.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 20 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 21—*Appeals*.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): I wish to express again the reservation I have already made with respect to the appeal procedures. I believe they should have been spelled out and that an independent and impartial board is to be desired. I believe the commission and the government will within a comparatively short time be compelled to take this position.

Mr. Benson: In reply I can assure the hon. gentleman that the court of final decision, that is, the appeal board, will be an independent group appointed by a commission which is also independent of the government. It is very similar to what was done in Bill No. C-170 which has just been passed, with regard to arbitration tribunals.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 22 to 31 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 32—*Political partisanship*.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, before I make a few remarks on this clause and propose the amendment which I should like to make with

respect to it, may I say I was pleased to hear the announcement which the minister made a few moments ago that Mr. Carson, the present chairman of the Civil Service Commission, will be the chairman of the new Public Service Commission. I would also hope that Mr. Cloutier and Miss Addison will be continued as members of that commission.

Clause 32 is the one which deals with the question of political activity on the part of public servants and, as hon. members are fully aware, the particular provision before us is one which came out of the special joint committee itself. As my hon. friend from York South has pointed out, we moved an amendment which would have broadened the provision of this clause. Really we won, because more parties voted for our amendment than voted against it. But somehow or other the Conservatives, the New Democrats, the Social Credit members and the Cr ditistes were outnumbered by government supporters.

Mr. Reid: That is why you are in the opposition.

Mr. Walker: Carry on. Everything has been fine so far.

Mr. Knowles: I was wondering what party that voice came from. The hon. member has evidently been reading the Gallup polls and is wondering where the present parties are going.

As has already been indicated, since we lost in the special joint committee on the proposal we then made, we do not intend to divide this committee on the same broad question. But we do think the government and members of the committee should consider the appeal which was made by my hon. friend from York South and which I myself spoke about on Friday. The substance was that we should go one step further than we have done up to the present.

• (6:20 p.m.)

Clause 32, as drafted in its present form, provides for a ban on political activity but it does make three exceptions. It permits a civil servant to become a candidate under certain conditions. We will not quarrel with those conditions now that they have been worked out. In addition, clause 32 says clearly that it is not a contravention of the ban on political activity on the part of civil servants to attend political meetings or to make contributions. The contributions can be either to the candidacy of a particular nominee or they can be to the funds of a political party. It is our