

There are features about the whole proceeding which I know are not as satisfactory as they should be; there have been suggestions that some of the competing companies had too much to do with the negotiations, but at any rate this whole business was arranged with the consent of the British government and the other dominions, who presumably knew what they were doing, so I think our best plan is to accept the situation and let the bill go through.

Mr. HEAPS: I asked for some information from the Postmaster General in reference to the financial standing of the Pacific cable board, and I wonder if he has that information available as yet?

Mr. VENIOT: I am told that quite a bit of work is necessary in order to secure this information and that it will take some time to complete. Would the hon. gentleman be satisfied to allow this bill to go through on my undertaking to produce the information later? It will take more than a day to obtain what he desires, because we will have to go over all the traffic accounts and everything submitted to the department, and that will mean a good deal of work.

Mr. HEAPS: I do not wish to hold up the bill but I do think we should have had all this information some time ago in order to allow us to discuss this question more intelligently. However, perhaps the Postmaster General can tell me something about the contract entered into between the government and the company operating the beam system between Canada and Australia?

Mr. VENIOT: That information will have to come from the Department of Marine and Fisheries, as far as I know.

Mr. HEAPS: Was a license issued by the Department of Marine and Fisheries?

Mr. VENIOT: I believe that is the only department with authority to issue such licenses, but I do not know whether or not such a license was issued.

Section as amended agreed to.

Section 2 agreed to.

Bill as amended reported.

Amendments read the first and second times and concurred in.

Mr. VENIOT moved the third reading of the bill.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I did not wish to interrupt the discussion when the bill was in committee, but I deem it advisable to place on

record the reason why our government has been anxious to proceed with the measure and not occasion delay through waiting to bring down some of the further information which has been requested. As my hon. friend from North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps) knows, the sale of the Pacific cable is a matter which concerns the British government, the Australian government, the New Zealand government and the Canadian government; all these governments met together through their representatives and concluded the arrangement which is now before this house. The British government naturally was anxious to conclude this transaction before its present term of office was up, and the reason we have been handicapped in the matter of securing much of the data is because it is only within the last day or two that the business has been finally concluded. The parliament in Great Britain has been dissolved and it is unknown just what government may be in office after the next general election. The present administration is anxious that this transaction should be completed before that particular unknown period is reached. If we were to delay our consent to the agreement, we might be assuming the responsibility of upsetting a transaction which three other governments have already approved of and assented to, and which we believe to be in the interest of Canada. There would be, too, the possibility of returning to the position we were in a year or two ago when instead of assets to the government's credit we were confronted with increasing liabilities.

Motion agreed to on division, bill read the third time and passed.

WESTERN POSTAL EMPLOYEES

READJUSTMENT OF SALARIES OF THOSE DISMISSED AND REEMPLOYED

The house resumed from May 6 consideration in committee of the following proposed resolution—Mr. Veniot—Mr. Johnston in the chair.

Resolved, that it is expedient to provide for the readjustment of the salaries of certain postal employees in western Canada who were dismissed in 1919 and subsequently re-employed, to give them the benefit of salary they would have received had they re-entered the service in the class equivalent to the one they were in when dismissed, and of subsequent salary revisions, and to make provision whereby certain former employees not now in the said service shall be eligible for reappointment as vacancies occur.

Mr. VENIOT: When this resolution was before the committee certain interpretations were placed upon it, and those interpretations,