

*By Mr. Raymond:*

Q. Mr. MacKay, you represent here, no matter if you are from British Columbia, the full supervision or the general superintendance of Indian agencies in British Columbia. That is correct? You have been brought here to speak on this matter today as such?—A. Yes.

Q. I should like to know from Mr. Hoey, in the case of Mr. Thibault who has resigned, who is the acting inspector for the province of Quebec? Is there anybody there as inspector at the present time? Have you now an inspector in the province of Quebec?

Mr. HOEY: I would say no. What is happening at the moment is this. If there is any particular problem at Caughnawaga or Oka or any other agency in the province of Quebec, we send an official of the welfare division down there to deal with it; but we have no such thing as an acting inspector in his absence or pending his retirement.

Mr. RAYMOND: According to the actual law, there will be no appointment until six months have passed?

Mr. HOEY: In Mr. Thibault's case, I think it is two or three months' retirement leave that he has secured. Then the position will be filled after either promotion, by competition or open competition by the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. RAYMOND: Thank you, sir.

Mr. CASE: How do you learn of problems in Quebec? You say if you hear of a problem you send a welfare officer down there. How do you learn of the problems?

Mr. HOEY: Well, an Indian agent might write in about a work project or the delay in construction of a building. We might feel that it required an officer to go down from Ottawa.

*By Mr. MacNicol:*

Q. Coming back to administration again and these special officers you spoke about in British Columbia. There are three agencies vacant, I understand. Did I understand one administrative position also was vacant?—A. Yes.

Q. And what staff you have is now overworked and those four positions are all vacant?—A. Yes; and they would be overworked even if we had those men appointed.

Mr. MACNICOL: Mr. Chairman, this is very important information. It strikes me that this committee should concentrate some of its grey matter on how to overcome situations like this, because the situation in the Indian Affairs Department looks to me to be very, very serious.

The CHAIRMAN: I might suggest that at the present time probably the delay in civil service appointments is because of this: I think the Civil Service Commission have taken the position that returned men should be given the preference and they have been holding back appointments until the qualified men returned from overseas. I think that explains to some extent some of the delay in the service at the present time, but probably not in Indian affairs.

Mr. RAYMOND: Perhaps. But, Mr. Chairman, I believe temporary appointments should be made. That I believe should be done.

Mr. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if Mr. MacKay would indicate what ideas he might have as to whether he feels he is allowed sufficient discretion in his administration. British Columbia is a long way from here, I know; it is 3,000 miles away. But I just wonder if he feels he has enough authority out there to take it upon himself to do the things necessary in urgent cases, or does he feel somewhat hampered by having to get instructions from Ottawa at all times? I should like him to be very frank about that, if he would, because it might be helpful.