

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I understand that, according to the present law of the Civil Service—with which I do not profess to be familiar—this appointment cannot be made on the recommendation of a committee. I understand, however, that the gentleman who is recommended for appointment is acceptable and is to be appointed, but by the regular authority that has power to deal with such matters under the law.

Mr. HUGHES. Inasmuch as there is a divergence of opinion, as I understand it, as to the competent appointing body, would it not be well to have the matter looked into? As far as I am concerned, if the Committee on Debates is only an ornament, not being much of an ornament, I must decline to continue to act on it; and I am satisfied that that is the feeling of the other members of the committee. If one committee of this House can engage a young professor to perambulate the country for another purpose, I cannot see why a standing committee of this House should not have the authority to recommend the appointment of an officer to carry on the work of which that committee has charge.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I can only say to my hon. friend (Mr. Hughes) that I should be sorry to lose his services on this committee. I could better dispense with his services in some other matters. He is right sometimes, especially in military affairs—

Mr. HUGHES. This is not a military committee.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER—and I understand that, in this case, the gentleman he recommends is quite acceptable.

Mr. HUGHES. That is not the point. This is a question of principle—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. That is it; have we or have we not this power?

Mr. HUGHES. That is what we want to find out.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I understand that the authorities deny that we have the power.

Mr. HUGHES. Would the Prime Minister mind giving the authority to the House?

Mr. FIELDING. It is provided under the Civil Service Act.

Mr. SPROULE. The Act provides how appointments shall be made to the Civil Service. And, while, as I understand it, it was not intended to take from the House any of its rights in the management of its affairs, still it was agreed that appointments should be made according to the Act, and

by the same authority that makes appointments in other portions of the Civil Service—that is, the Civil Service Board. If that be correct, I do not think that this is the way to do it. This involves a charge on the revenue, and is not in order for that reason. But there is the other objection that appointments are to be made by the Civil Service Board and not on recommendation of this committee.

Mr. GERVAIS. Under the Civil Service Act, action with regard to the appointment of an officer of the House of Commons must be taken by the House of Commons. And, in the case of the appointment of an officer of the Senate, action must be taken by that House. I understand that, by the passing of the Civil Service Act, the House has not been deprived of its power of expression which it gets from the law of nature and not from any enactment. And it has power to express itself to the Civil Service Commission in relation to an appointment. The Debates Committee are simply making a recommendation to the Civil Service Commissioners that Mr. Desaulniers be appointed; that is all we are now doing. If the appointing commission do not want to deal with our recommendation, the time will come to decide whether their action is legal or illegal, right or wrong. But I do not think for a moment that the House of Commons should refuse to recommend a first-class man, who has passed his examination three years ago—before the Board of Civil Service Commissioners was established—and come out of the examination with the highest marks, who has been on the waiting list for three years and has been employed as spare translator at an occasion during that time, and who also is declared by the government as perfectly capable of doing his work. We propose, that, and I think the House of Commons should express its opinion that Mr. Desaulniers will be a fit and suitable person to be translator of debates. It will rest with the Civil Service Commission to accept the expression of opinion of the House of Commons. That is all we are asking of the House. We may make the recommendation—

Mr. SPROULE. I would like to ask the hon. member (Mr. Gervais) a question. He recommends to the House thus and so; the House agrees to the recommendation—is not that practically carrying it into effect?

Mr. GERVAIS. It is not the same thing at all. Under the new Civil Service Act, the commissioners may declare that our recommendation is not in conformity with all the requirements of the formalities provided for under the Act, and may refuse to accept our recommendation. That will end