

I think we are treading on dangerous ground. The civil servants of Canada will be discontented and aroused by the fact that we are setting up special groups of government employees and giving them special privileges, whether they be temporary civil servants, career civil servants, permanent civil servants or crown company civil servants. We are laying ourselves open to a lot of difficulty. It is not so important for the government to keep on the payroll a few officials who have joined the staff of the procurement branch of the Department of National Defence to buy war supplies for the dominion government as it is to make a breach of the established, time-tried custom of the Civil Service Act and civil service superannuation. The main purpose of this bill, as was evidenced by the remarks of the Minister of Trade and Commerce today, is to create a crown company to buy supplies, construct, procure and manufacture for the Department of National Defence and to blanket these employees into the civil service along with our career civil servants. Those who have been on loan from private enterprise to the war supply board have done a meritorious job. They will continue on loan from private enterprise. Yet they are being blanketed into government appointments at salaries largely set by themselves. We know instances of salaries or remuneration greatly in excess of the salary or remuneration of civil servants who were in the service of the national defence department for a long time.

Before we embark upon a policy of this kind I should like the minister to explain whether or not it is the government's intention to extend the life of the Canadian Commercial Corporation, and if they intend to do it permanently or whether they want this company to do the purchasing for the Department of National Defence for a few short months and then send the employees back to the Department of National Defence or to other departments to do the work they were doing before war broke out.

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out to the minister two or three principles in connection with this corporation. I remember that last session by chapter 40 of the 1946 statutes this Canadian Commercial Corporation was created for certain specific purposes. I believe these corporations are becoming a menace to parliamentary control and are not in the interests of responsible government. They have been created for specific purposes. Are we to remove this corporation from the control of parliament? It is going to assume all the powers and functions of the minister. All of

the officers of the old corporation are under the direct control of the minister for the specific purpose of making purchases of munitions of war or supplies and so forth. By this act are we going to remove from control by parliament and the auditor general the purchase of supplies by this ministry on land, sea and in the air, spending money running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

I wish to point out that is one of the principles on which United States seceded from Britain, namely, taxation without representation, lack of responsibility. We shall not always get a minister who is as strong a supporter of responsible government as the present minister is. Is this Department of National Defence the only department which can be selected by the minister? Because every officer and subofficer of the Canadian Commercial Corporation from the top to the bottom is an officer directly under the minister and is under the control of the minister. The functions and powers are set out in chapter 40 of the statutes of last year. We are now amending part II to empower the corporation to act directly for the minister and assume all his powers, duties and functions regarding the purchase of supplies for the whole defence department. By that the functions of the auditor general will be removed. We are encroaching on his powers now. I know of another corporation for which \$300,000 was voted. The other day I asked as to the way this grant was spent, as the Minister of Public Works said it was a statutory one. We could not get any information. I wanted them to give the house the particulars of this expenditure. The responsible minister of the crown, the Minister of Public Works, told me that it is statutory now, that they have no control over that, and he would not give any details. Has the auditor general any control over this corporation? If the minister is going to purchase for other departments? I should like to see him include another department, because as I read the functions of the act, chapter 40 of the statutes of last session, I do not believe the minister needs a bill like this at all to enable him to act for the defence minister in purchases. The corporation now has sufficient powers, without this bill, to buy supplies for these united defence departments. Consequently, if he is going to buy supplies and all that kind of thing, or otherwise produce them, and construct or carry out projects, I should like to see him act for another department. The minister has a valuable group of officials listed in his trade and commerce booklet every month. You can see the good