

*Employment Commission*

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I would say to my right hon. friend that I think this is drafted on the lines of a bill which he himself introduced. The bill relating to the appointment of the tariff board sets forth provisions similar to those my right hon. friend has just quoted with respect to the members of the board, there then follows this provision; "There shall be a secretary of the board who shall be appointed by the governor in council." There is no special provision as to the payment of the secretary. That is covered, I assume, by the general authority given in another section of the bill.

Mr. BETTS: May I ask whether all the employees of the commission other than the secretary will be appointed by the civil service commission?

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. ROGERS: It is not the intention that all the employees of the national employment commission shall be taken from the permanent civil service. It is impossible, as the hon. member (Mr. Betts) well understands, to give any definite assurance in this regard. I do think that where it is possible to secure suitable personnel in the civil service it will be desirable to have them attached to the national employment commission, but it is not the intention to bar other appointments.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: Has the government considered what pay the commissioners themselves should be given?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, that matter has been considered. The Minister of Labour mentioned the other evening that it is possible special consideration will have to be given in the case of one or two of the commissioners as to the fees to be paid to them; on their part they may be prepared to make special offers to the government as to the basis upon which they would be willing to serve. It has not been thought advisable to determine too far in advance of the appointments themselves what will be paid by way of fees to different members of the commission.

Mr. MacINNIS: Subsection 2 of section 5 provides that the employees shall be appointed by the governor in council, not by the civil service commission. Will the minister tell the committee the reason for that?

Mr. ROGERS: In making this provision we were simply following, I am informed what has been the practice with respect to temporary employees. As my hon. friend is aware, the payment of such employees is covered by appropriations from year to year. We are hoping and indeed trusting that this will be

[Mr. Bennett.]

temporary employment, and in the past it has not been the practice to bring such temporary employees under the provisions of the Civil Service Act. I need only refer to the unemployment relief branch of the Department of Labour, as it has developed during the past five years. All the employees of that branch are temporary and have not been brought under the terms of the Civil Service Act.

Mr. MacNEIL: Before the committee rose on Friday last the minister gave the assurance that he would indicate the manner in which these appointments would be made and whether or not it would be possible to maintain the preference for ex-service men. I am under the impression that an order in council does provide for that preference in regard to temporary appointments, and I would ask that the minister give this special consideration inasmuch as it may be necessary to make a general appeal to employing interests to employ a reasonable quota of physically handicapped men. In this regard it seems to me the government should set an example and absorb as many physically handicapped ex-service men as may be successfully placed and as can efficiently perform the duties defined.

Mr. ROGERS: I have not forgotten the question raised by my hon. friend at the close of the sitting Friday night. I looked into the matter and discovered that it had not been the practice to apply the returned soldier preference to temporary employees of the government. I can assure the hon. member, however, that we shall be very glad indeed to follow what is the established practice in that regard, and I may assure him also that we will give due consideration to the reasonable claims of the ex-service men, as he has put them just now.

Mr. BETTS: Would this not be a good time to amend the practice in that respect and give returned soldiers the preference in connection with this large number of appointments?

Mr. ROGERS: Our hope is that there will not be a large number of appointments. I have already indicated that it is our intention as far as may be possible to utilize the services of those who are now in the permanent government service. So far as other employees are concerned it is very probable that their suitability will be determined by special qualifications. I yield nothing to my hon. friend in his solicitude for the position of ex-service men who are now out of employment, but I do not know that it would be wise to do more than give the assurance I just gave the hon. member for Vancouver North in that regard.