

The remainder of the Bill consists of the schedules.

This Bill is strictly a money Bill, and subject only to rejection; therefore I see no object in going into Committee upon it.

May I call attention to an error in the marginal note to clause 4, which reads, "\$8,440,000 granted for 1923-33." It should be 1932-33. I do not think we should imperil the constitution by seeking to amend even a marginal note. Possibly calling attention to it will result in its being corrected.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I suppose the Supply Bill includes all supplementaries.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Oh, yes.

Hon. Mr. LEMIEUX: Is it provided that any borrowing will be done via the banks, or will it be through the issuing of bonds?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: It would be by bonds, in the usual way. The clause reads:

The Governor in Council may, in addition to the sums now remaining unborrowed and negotiable of the loans authorized by Parliament by any Act heretofore passed, raise by way of loan, under the provisions of The Consolidated Revenue and Audit Act, 1931, by the issue and sale or pledge of securities of Canada, in such form, for such separate sums, at such rate of interest and upon such other terms and conditions as the Governor in Council may approve, such sum or sums of money as may be required, not to exceed in the whole the sum of two hundred million dollars, for public works and general purposes.

I presume that is a stereotyped clause that has come down through the years.

Hon. RAOUL DANDURAND: Honourable members of the Senate, I understand that considerable effort has been made to reduce the expenditure authorized by this Bill. I was struck with the figures placed upon Hansard the other day by the honourable gentleman from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae), in which he showed that, in comparison with the expenditure that could not be controlled, the controllable expenditure was very small. Of course the query in all our minds is: How can we reduce that expenditure? The question may be approached from many angles. I suppose that expenditures on public works could be tested in every item; also the expenditures for purposes of defence. I have seen somewhere a rather large figure for military aviation—a figure which has somewhat surprised me. I am not absolving the Government of which I was a member from all blame for the increase in that expenditure, which, I will now confess, struck me as being of a somewhat doubtful character. I have to accept my share of the responsibility.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

I have in mind chiefly, however, the Civil Service of Canada. I do not know what is the total expenditure under that head, but I know it is very large. We have an army of civil servants. Yesterday I spoke of the heads of the departments or branches and the various experts as highly qualified men. Upon that point I will not dilate further. But there lingers in my mind a thought that came to me some years ago when a Senate committee was engaged in an endeavour to ascertain whether or not the Civil Service was really overmanned. We examined the heads of all departments and of virtually all branches. One or two of those in authority, deputy ministers, admitted at that time that they took it for granted that a man entering the Service entered it for life, and that it was not their business to do anything, even to lift a finger, to oust him from his position. That was a very important statement, and indicated a very dangerous situation. In the organization of the staffs of all large institutions in the country there is some elasticity: they may be increased or reduced. But according to the statements we heard, once a person enters the Civil Service he is convinced, and his superiors are of the same conviction, that he is there for life, whatever changes or transformations may occur. Such is the tradition.

Now, if that is the opinion of the deputy ministers and the heads of branches, I would ask whose business it is, when one, two, five or ten employees in a department or branch have become useless through changed conditions, to see that they are transferred to other departments or branches. We went into that question with the Civil Service Commission at the time, and the commission, it seemed, was not empowered to go to the length of examining into departments to ascertain whether any department had too many employees, some of whom should be transferred to other departments.

In view of the situation which confronts us, I wonder whether my right honourable friend would not ask his colleagues to ponder over the situation that I have outlined and to consider this state of mind of the heads of departments. It may be that a very large saving could be effected in that sphere. I am not asking for the retirement of hundreds of employees. This is a matter for the Government to decide. The Civil Service Commission or some other authority might be asked to deal with the matter, and men who could be dispensed with might be placed at their disposal for transfer to other departments. I think that if this were done a considerable saving could be effected.