

Manpower and Immigration Council

and so on. Clause 21 provides that the minister may establish such regional and local manpower committees as he considers necessary for the purpose of advising and assisting the department. Where is the tie-in between the regional and local manpower committees and the council itself? Because of the wording in clause 21, it seems to me that these various regional boards will report to the department or the minister. This would appear to be an assumption of the powers of the council. Could the minister explain this?

Mr. Marchand: It is clear, at least in my mind, that these local and regional committees will have to work with the local manpower centres. If they wish to make a recommendation concerning the policy of the department, they will have to make their recommendation to the council. The council will study the recommendation and advise the minister accordingly.

Mr. Pugh: Would it not be better then, in clause 21, to say that they should report to the council or to the department? The bill states they will report to the department on such things as they are required to report on.

Mr. Marchand: I think what I have attempted to say is that they will work differently. I think the local centres will be represented on the committee by advisors or representatives. So, locally they agree to work together. If they wish to make a recommendation which concerns, for example, rehabilitation, this recommendation will have to go through the special board which is concerned with rehabilitation. After that it will go to the council and then to the minister. So, the whole structure will be fully used.

Mr. Pugh: What the minister has just said makes sense, but I think it will be unworkable because the first paragraph of clause 21 says they will report to the department which would suggest that they report to the department alone.

Mr. Marchand: Of course, it depends on what we call the department. There is the branch which is called the local manpower centre which is integrated in the department. There is no doubt that there are many problems which have to be solved locally. They do not have to be solved here in Ottawa. They can be solved between the committee and the local manpower centre. They work together with the department. If the recommendation is of a general nature I think it will be handled locally.

Mr. MacDonald (Prince): Mr. Chairman, I regard this particular clause 21 as almost the most important part of this bill because it brings us back to facing the reality, I hope, of the concern I expressed in my few comments yesterday. Before making a couple of specific remarks about this clause, I should like to say that I think both the minister and the department have moved in the right direction. They may have struck a few rocky shoals in their first few months of operation and they may have encountered a few frustrations, but I trust these will be worked out in good faith as the months go by and that more effective work will be achieved by his department.

One of the increasing fears which all of us have, because it has been a reality in some instances, is the tremendous power of bureaucracy and often the loss of reality as a result of the mass of monolithic institutions of government or big business. In this case we are dealing with government. I am not quite as concerned as my colleague the hon. member for Okanagan Revelstoke with the problems which may relate to the passing on of advice to the minister or his officials in Ottawa. I think our major responsibility will have to be in dealing with the local situation and ensuring that good advice and assistance be given to the local regions and in general.

There are, however, difficulties associated with these things. I think we may be coming back to this problem in the future when we deal with the minister's estimates and other matters. I hope, in the context of this particular clause, that the minister will assure us there will be a provision for close liaison with the provincial governments. There have been a number of examples of inadequate liaison or poor communication. I think we should overcome this. It would seem to me that in this clause of the bill it would be natural to have a provision that key people in the provincial government administration be linked up with the manpower officials so that there can be an effective co-ordination of responsibility to ensure that we will not remove the benefit of the good experience which has already resulted from the work and good judgment of these officials.

I do not wish to sound petty or hypocritical, but the other thing which concerns me is the fear that when we set up something like this it will become a haven for tried and true political friends. I expect it is quite natural for any government to be anxious to reward those who have served the party in good faith or to choose people simply because they are well known to a select few. In the matter of