

Mr. PARENT: I suppose a salary will be provided for this new official?

Mr. ROWELL: There will have to be an estimate.

Mr. BELAND: What will be his functions?

Mr. ROWELL: I would think his work would correspond largely with what is now being done by the secretary of the War Purchasing Commission, who has charge of the office operations and the general direction of the staff, under the commissioners, of course. That is really what is contemplated. He might be called the secretary of the commission instead of the director. At present he is named the secretary of the commission. The present commission suggested that he be called a director, but if any hon. member thinks there is anything in the name I have no objection to changing it to "secretary."

Mr. PARENT: Will he have more power than the chairman of the commission?

Mr. ROWELL: Oh, no. He will be entirely subject to the commissioners.

Mr. BELAND: He wears a big title.

Mr. McKENZIE: He is a sort of field marshal, according to this.

Mr. ROWELL: I have no objection to calling him "secretary."

Mr. McKENZIE: The drafters of this Act may have a specific meaning for the word "director," which would not be covered by the word "secretary," and if the minister has any doubt about it I think this subsection should stand.

Mr. ROWELL: I am agreeable.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: There is no reason why the Governor in Council should appoint the secretary. He should surely be appointed by the Civil Service Commission. Subsection (2) of this section provides that any member of the purchasing staff of the War Purchasing Commission may be transferred to the new commission, but there is no mention made of the members of the purchasing staffs of the different departments.

Mr. ROWELL: Subsection (3) deals with that. It says: "Such other officers, clerks and employees as may be necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the commission may be appointed or transferred from any other portion of the public service, under the provisions of the Civil Service Act, 1918." That is intended to cover

transfers, so far as may be necessary or be considered expedient by the minister in charge of the department and the commission.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: The minister thinks that covers purchasing agents in the different departments?

Mr. ROWELL: I think so. It provides that they may be transferred from any other portion of the public service. I will consider it further, if the hon. member desires.

Mr. McKENZIE: We have these three commissioners and this director or secretary, and we are going to have an aggregation collected from eighteen departments. How many people does the minister think there will be altogether in this happy combination he is going to get together?

Mr. ROWELL: I think there are at present, in all the departments and the commission combined, in the neighbourhood of 300 of these officers, if you include purchasing, inspecting and receiving staffs. It would not be feasible nor desirable to transfer them all, because in every department you must have some one to do the requisitioning and receive the supplies. So a certain number would remain in each department; I do not know how many; that is a matter to be arranged between the minister of the department and the commission. The others would be available for transfer to the new commission. I would anticipate that when the commission is fully organized the great majority of those in the different purchasing staffs of the various departments will be transferred to the commission. I think it is only a matter of fair dealing that men in the public service should not have their positions cut away by legislation without some effort being made to provide them with suitable positions. Under those conditions I would anticipate that a reduction in the staff would take place when men retired from it or were transferred to some other department of the Government and those vacancies were not filled. I do not think we could anticipate an immediate reduction, but I would anticipate an early reduction in the total number. I do not anticipate any increase at all.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: Who does the requisitioning?

Mr. ROWELL: The requisition comes from the department to the commission.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: From the deputy minister?