

I know there is a misconception amongst a great many people that they have to apply to the Commission, and to undergo some kind of a test. As a matter of fact, if anybody sends in an application applying for a position as fire ranger, we send that back to the department's representative.

Q. In that case the chief fire ranger?—A. Yes, they are given the power of local selection, advertising the same locally, applications to be sent in to the department representative of the district, and he makes practically his own selection and recommends who shall be appointed, with this additional precaution, that we have imposed upon them, namely, that they shall certify first, that these selections have been made irrespective of any favouritism, political or otherwise, and the returned soldiers have been given the preference.

Q. Would it not be much better if that were known? In the meantime you are carrying all the abuse that goes with these selections?—A. That is not our fault. It is because of the want of information. We give information to everybody who applies, and the department is quite well aware of the fact. They have practically their local selection.

Q. I do not care who makes the appointment, but I think in the interest of frankness, peace and harmony it should be made clear that that man has the actual appointment of those people, because at the present time the assertion is made that they are appointed here by men who do not know anything about the situation?—A. That is not so.

Q. That is the law?—A. No, that is the principle, namely, that the Civil Service Commission shall certify to the appointment of these men, but we act through certain machinery which we establish, and the machinery which we set up to see that favouritism is not exercised, and that competition is involved in connection with all such appointments, but the departmental representative is given latitude to make his selection of those who apply, to select the best, giving the returned soldier who happens to have the qualifications the preference, so that, so far as the work of the department is concerned, it is not rendered less efficient by reason of our procedure at all.

Mr. GRIESBACH: I think it is important that the actual responsibility should be definitely located.

Mr. H. J. MACKIE: Take, for instance, a mining rush up into a portion of the country under the jurisdiction of the Dominion fire rangers; it is found that a fire warden is immediately necessary in that district for safe-guarding from fires. If the department had to make application through the Civil Service Commission for a fire warden, and two or three months elapsed before the appointment was made, what is liable to happen in that country as the result of the delay?—A. Evidently you are not acquainted with the provisions of the present Act. The department can put on a man to-day and keep him there for thirty days without our permission at all. It is only after the employment has lasted for thirty days that we are asked to furnish a certificate. As a matter of fact, we can extend that time. In emergency appointments away from Ottawa the Civil Service Act provides that the department shall have the right to put on a man immediately, so that they do not have to wait.

*By Hon. Mr. Calder:*

Q. What provision is there in the present law regarding that?—A. Section 38 provides—and I am speaking in effect now—that where it is impracticable to apply the provisions of the Civil Service Act, the Civil Service Commission shall recommend to the Governor in Council the exemption of a particular class. I use that as an illustration to show the Commission is not grasping unnecessary work. Goodness knows, if they took away the whole outside service it would be a relief to us, but it is the principle of the thing we think would be unfortunate, but under that section of the Act the Commission found it would be better from the standpoint of the public service, rather than have constant irritation and friction going on between the department and the Commission, that the temporary appointments in connection with the Soldiers' Settlement Board should be removed from the operation of the

[Hon. Dr. W. J. Roche.]