

War Appropriation Bill

Nor do I need to take the time of the committee in referring to my ancestors. My hon. friend can go back and refer to his if he wants to. I have, however, rather distinct recollections of my own ancestry in the ranks of Liberalism, if that is of any interest regarding loyalty to my leader. I only want to say this, that I have been true to my leader. I have endeavoured, in season and out of season, to support him not only when he was in power but when he was out of power. I have endeavoured to do my duty by my party and by the country as I saw it, and it does not lie in the mouth of any hon. gentleman in this house to make the reflections which my hon. friend has seen fit to make to-day. I am not in the habit of proclaiming my loyalty either to my country or to my leader or to my party. I endeavour to make actions speak louder than words.

May I allude, Mr. Chairman, to two other references which my hon. friend has made. He has referred to Mr. Victor Sifton, who happens to be master-general of the ordnance at the present time. Mr. Sifton, a gentleman from Manitoba, came down here as a citizen of this country to assist Mr. Philip Chester, who had agreed to take for a limited time the position of master-general of the ordnance. Mr. Sifton came down here to assist him in connection with the reorganization of that branch of the department in order that we might attain the greatest possible efficiency in the obtaining of supplies which were all important. Mr. Sifton assisted Mr. Chester, and Mr. Chester gave us his valuable business experience in connection with that work. After about three months, Mr. Chester felt that he was able to leave that office in such shape that he believed it would carry on efficiently. Before he left, he recommended in the strongest possible terms that Mr. Sifton be made master-general of the ordnance. Hon. gentlemen will understand that there might have been some heart-burning on the part of military officers in connection with that appointment. I want to say to the house that it was only after the gravest consideration that Mr. Sifton was appointed. He was appointed because of Mr. Chester's recommendation, and because of what I knew of his personal character and ability. I am glad to say that his appointment was universally accepted by the military officers with whom he is associated. Mr. Sifton is carrying on as any patriotic citizen would want to do, and without salary and without expenses of any kind, giving his services to this country as master-general of the ordnance. I want to say of Mr. Sifton, because he cannot speak for himself, that I have the highest possible confidence in him and believe that his adminis-

[Mr. Ralston.]

tration will be for the great benefit of Canada, particularly in connection with that important branch of our undertaking.

With regard to Colonel Magee, president of Barclay's bank, I asked Colonel Magee to come to Ottawa. My hon. friend is quite right in that. I personally asked Colonel Magee to come to Ottawa to assist me as senior executive assistant. He came here and has been here ever since. I want to say that I would be greatly surprised if Colonel Magee has given my hon. friend the slightest ground for the attack which he has made on him to-day. I believe he has met all members courteously, has endeavoured to give the very best attention which could possibly be given to the many important matters with which he has had to deal and has been sympathetic and highly efficient in all these matters. I know he has done his level best as a patriotic and extremely capable Canadian to promote the interests of our dominion at this time when we are at war.

That is all I have to say with regard to those matters.

This matter of \$200 a day—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): May I suggest to the minister that he say a word on behalf of the judge advocate-general in view of the vicious attack which was made upon him.

Mr. RALSTON: I did not know that my hon. friend had also singled out the judge advocate-general. The judge advocate-general has been in the department for a good many years; he was there when I was there before. I know that Brigadier Orde has carried out his duties as a Canadian should, and there is, I think, no man in Canada who is so well versed as he in military law and in the practices of the department which requires expert and skilled advice.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Thank you.

Mr. RALSTON: The \$200 a day has been mentioned. Indeed, it has been mentioned so often that I think hon. members must be tired of hearing about it. But this is the first opportunity I have had to mention it.

I was asked and was pressed to accept the position of counsel to the grain commission three years ago. This was after I was out of public life and had retired to private practice where I felt my duty to my family required me to be. I accepted that position and for my services indicated the same fee which had been paid to other legal gentlemen in connection with commissions. I could not accept less because I was giving my whole time to the commission and my firm were entitled to my services. The money was paid to my firm, and my share distributed to me, and their