

basis. All governments have endeavoured to reduce the number of their employees. I doubt if we shall ever reach an ideal basis, but I hope, under the operation of the Civil Service Commission, that better days are in store for us.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Middlesex)—I do not quite approve of the observation made by the hon. leader of the opposition with regard to the Lemieux Act. I live in a large centre of industry. Although Toronto has been, fortunately, free from strikes and labour disturbances, still, so far as I know, the public feeling of western Ontario is decidedly in favour of this court of conciliation. It has worked admirably in coal mine strikes in the west, and has worked admirably in Montreal on various occasions, and I think the Act, as a court of conciliation, practically intercepting the movements of those inside who are disposed to make a strike, or an employer of labour who is disposed to be over-exacting with his employees, has worked, a partial revolution in the relations between capital and labour, and the Act has met with the approval of many countries who have been more perplexed with labour problems than we, and who have suffered more than Canada from irregularities of that kind. Therefore, I must express my cordial approval of the Lemieux Act and its successful operation. I cannot express my approval so cordially of the appointment of a Minister of Labour.

I think the hon. leader of the opposition has pointed out the true remedy for the better administration of the public service. I had the honour and pleasure of discussing this matter last session in the Senate, and cited the British system, a system which in many respects we have copied, and which, so far as the appointment of under secretaries is concerned, is, to my mind, a solution for the difficulties existing in the present administration of the public affairs of Canada. The British cabinet is a small cabinet. Although it governs an empire of three or four hundred million, it rarely exceeds twenty. It is usually under twenty—down as low as nineteen, and in the early days it was contended that a British cabinet should not exceed twelve. We cannot make exact comparisons. We

cannot take the population and propose it as a proper basis for the cost of administration, or for the difficulties of administration comparing one country with another. But there is the fact: The British empire is administered by a cabinet of twelve, but when I say that, let not the House be misled. Although the cabinet is now fifteen or twenty, the administration consists of sixty persons, and there is an under secretary for almost every public department. This is not the time to dwell upon the advantage of the appointment of under secretaries. There are in the House of Lords representatives of almost every department of the public service in the government. Where a cabinet minister sits in the Commons, his under secretary sits in the Lords and vice versa. I do not want to reflect in the slightest degree upon the administration of the public service in Canada to-day, but I am quite sure that, apart from the advantage there would be in educating young men for the public service, there would be a decided advantage in both houses if there was a sort of subdivision of the responsibility of the administration of the various departments, and that the officer or the head of the department who is in one House might be represented by the under secretary in the other. I am convinced, after watching the public service of Canada for many years, in the House of Commons for a time and for a short period here, that would be a remedy for many of the difficulties, and that it would facilitate the passing of Bills, so that probably at the end of the session business would not be congested as it is now, and it would promote a better discussion of public affairs. I do not think the multiplication of ministers is the best remedy for the matter at all, and although it may be considered necessary to appoint a Minister of Labour, I think the system of under secretaries would contribute far more to the efficiency of the public service and would expedite the administration of public business. The cabinet is now large and efficient. It is impossible, almost, to make reduction once you increase the number. But that is not a matter under consideration. I merely rise to reiterate my opinion, that the remedy for our difficulties is not the in-