

take up unnecessary time, but I would ask what is going to be the use of this scheme if, for instance, a member of parliament says, "I have seen the minister and Mr. Hawken and it is arranged that the port manager will receive instructions as to whom he shall appoint." That may or may not be true; but if he is to appoint John Smith because a member says, "Dear Ralph: You will appoint so and so to that particular job; you must do it because I have seen the minister and I have seen Mr. Hawken," where is that going to lead us?

I have heard the observation that we did not introduce this bill in pursuance of Sir Alexander Gibb's report. That is perfectly true. I did not introduce it and it is perfectly true also that I could not get it through—I wish to be quite frank with the house. The opposition of that day from Quebec was opposed to the bill as it now is. It was opposed to it then, and added to that the fact that our own friends were not in favour of it, dictator though I was I could not get this bill through—as I say, I want to be frank about it—and that is the reason why on the first occasion that offered I congratulated the Prime Minister in connection with the speech from the throne upon introducing the bill. I did so because I believed that unless it was done at the very first session it could not be done at all and would not be done. Had the fortunes of war been otherwise an effort would have been made to do it. Whether or not that effort would have succeeded I cannot say, but the hon. gentleman has succeeded and when he talks about a draft bill, immediately after the report we began to consider what form of bill might be utilized. But there never was submitted to council a draft bill in the sense of having finality, though there were discussions. I found, however, opposition among our own people as well as opposition from this side, led at that time by the present Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe), so that it would be absolutely impossible for us to get the bill through. When I say "impossible" I mean impossible in that sense.

Mr. POWER: I do not want to contradict the right hon. gentleman, and the Minister of Justice is not here, but I have no recollection of his having opposed any proposal to introduce a bill based on the Gibb report. I am speaking subject to correction, but I do not remember it.

Mr. BENNETT: Merely an expression of his disapproval of the report—that is what I am referring to. I am not going into details, because no bill was submitted to parliament. Not only did it come from one particular

man on this side of the house, but we knew from expressions of opinion made to the then minister of marine that hon. gentlemen were unalterably opposed to the legislation, and the speech made the other evening by the hon. member for Outremont (Mr. Vien) represented a view taken by many of our own people. Now this bill is before the house. I say it means just one thing: it means the substitution of the port managers for the commissioners for the purpose of recording the views of the member for that particular constituency. Is that sound or not? That is the whole issue.

Mr. FINN: That is not so; R. W. Hendry's appointment was sound as port manager.

Mr. BENNETT: The senior member for Halifax says it is not sound. I am inclined to agree that it is not right. What has been put forward by us here is this, that it is idle to say all the positions should be filled by the civil service commission—no one suggests it for a moment; it would be both unfair and unjust to suggest that that should be so. On the other hand there are positions that should be so filled in order that continuity may be obtained and permanency secured, and in order that the service may be in keeping with what the minister has said is desired by reason of this bill being submitted to the house. If for instance an appointment to the harbour of Vancouver is to be made merely on the say-so of members of parliament directed to the port manager, then the port manager is not managing the port, he is managing patronage; that will be his job, and it will take too much of his time, too much of any man's time, to deal with it. There is nothing new about this condition. I was hoping that the result of this new measure would be to eliminate in part that very unfortunate state of affairs. I have been told of ports where there have been a thousand applications for employment—that has not been unusual during the last five years—and that men would get a chit from a member or a minister and thereby would immediately be given a position. I was hopeful from what the minister said when the bill was introduced that that condition would disappear. Of course I realize that it cannot be removed in its entirety, but it should disappear with respect to positions that are so important that in the public interest they should be filled by men who would enjoy an assurance of permanence and of continuity in the service, in order that we might get the best results. I submit to the minister that if the effect of this bill is merely to substitute the port manager for the commissioners in receiving