

Employment in Public Service

will be able to tell it is a question is when I put a question mark at the end of it. Actually it is a question of personal privilege in connection with my role in the committee. I think the hon. member will recall that I brought forward an amendment in the committee which was much broader than the one that has been moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, or the clause that is in the bill.

• (6:50 p.m.)

Frankly, to my regret, I found that there were members on the committee—I want to stress the point that this was a personal amendment—who disagreed with this wide extension of political activity which my own amendment would have accomplished. I believe the hon. member for Halifax had his tongue in his cheek when he suggested that the amendments I put before the committee had been vetted by the President of the Treasury Board. This was not so. The President of the Treasury Board assured me that whatever recommendations came out of the committee in connection with this particular clause would be acceptable to him. He spoke on behalf of the government.

Mr. Knowles: If it was not the President of the Treasury Board, who was it?

Mr. Walker: It was the member for York Centre.

Mr. McCleave: Of course I accept the hon. member's question, but perhaps it should have an exclamation mark after it rather than a question mark. I should like to be out of order for about 30 seconds because I have to be on a committee tonight. I compliment the members of the committee for their contribution, and this includes the parliamentary secretary, the chairman, the hon. member for Carleton, the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and all the others.

The Chairman: Is it agreed that clause 32 shall stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Clause stands.

The Chairman: Is it also agreed that the question of the amendment will be taken at eight o'clock, or when the committee resumes?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Clauses 33 to 36 inclusive agreed to.

[Mr. Walker.]

On clause 37—*Ministerial Staffs.*

The Chairman: Shall clause 37 carry?

Mr. Benson: Stands.

The Chairman: Shall clause 37 stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Clause stands.

Clauses 38 to 48 inclusive agreed to.

Schedules A, B, C and D agreed to.

Mr. Benson: At this point, I should like to suggest the committee rise and report progress and that we take a dinner break until eight o'clock.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): Why could we not deal with clause 37?

Mr. Benson: I have a small amendment to propose to clause 37. If we wanted to revert to clause 37, I could move the amendment, which could then be considered by the committee over the dinner hour. The amendment to clause 37 would include in subclause (6), the leader of the government in the Senate or the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate. My amendment is as follows; and I would ask the Minister of Fisheries to move it:

That Bill C-181, an act respecting employment in the Public Service of Canada, be amended by striking out line 40 in subsection 6 of section 37 on page 16 and substituting the following:

"Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, leader of the government in the Senate or Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, as it".

Mr. Robichaud: I so move.

Mr. Knowles: I thought the minister accepted the bill as it came back from the committee, but now he is changing it.

Mr. Benson: The big difficulty was in connection with the position of the staff of the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate. This was brought to my personal attention after the bill came back, and it was something that was not considered at all by the committee. The amendment is being introduced in order to take care of the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate. Actually the present leader of the government in the Senate does not benefit because he is a member of the cabinet now and is covered. However, this might not be the case in the future.

The reason I am putting the amendment forward now is to avoid the bill being amended in the Senate and coming back to the House of Commons for such a small matter.