

of a deputy minister of marine, which position has been vacant for almost three years. I have asked this question repeatedly; I hope the minister will not be offended at my asking it again, but I think not only the members of this committee but the people at large look forward to the appointment of a deputy minister in the very near future. We do not know who it will be but we hear prominent names mentioned. It is true that the department has been well run under my hon. friend the minister, although we have offered criticism at times. The minister himself admitted not long ago that his department suffered because he had not engineers and had to call upon engineers outside the department for assistance, which cost a good deal of money. Perhaps that could have been avoided if a competent deputy minister had been appointed, although the assistant deputy is a very competent gentleman. On the other hand if the minister has discovered that he can run the department as it has been operated for the last three years, without the services of a deputy minister, while maintaining the efficiency of the service, I do not think we should be called upon to vote the salary of a deputy minister.

Hon. ALFRED DURANLEAU (Minister of Marine): I am not at all offended at the remarks of my hon. friend with regard to the appointment of a deputy minister, but I do not think the fact that no such appointment has been made has increased the engineering cost in the department. If I look up the public accounts from 1925 to 1930 I find that during that period outside engineers employed by the Department of Marine cost the government more than twice as much as they have cost since 1930, so I do not think the appointment of a deputy minister could have anything to do with that.

I have no other answer to give my hon. friend that I have not made already. This appointment is a prerogative of the Prime Minister, not of the Minister of Marine, and I suggest to my hon. friend that he should direct his question to the Prime Minister. I am anxious also that a deputy minister should be appointed. I have had to do a part of the work that would be done by such an appointee; I have done it as well as I could and we have saved as much money as possible in the operation of the department. Without definite knowledge I think I can say to my hon. friend that he may expect the appointment to be made very soon.

Mr. CASGRAIN: I am all sympathy for the Minister of Marine because he has had to do all that work himself, without the aid of a

[Mr. Casgrain.]

deputy minister. I sincerely hope that before long, say within the next few weeks, we may hear the good news that a new deputy minister has been appointed.

Mr. NEILL: I see provision made for a secretary to the wreck commissioner, at \$3,120, but there does not seem to be any provision for the wreck commissioner. Who is the secretary? Is he a technical man? Does he perform the duties of wreck commissioner or what has become of the wreck commissioner?

Mr. DURANLEAU: The position of wreck commissioner was declared vacant under an order in council adopted some time ago which provided that positions which had not been filled by a certain date should become vacant. Up to the present, since the retirement of Mr. Demers, who was the wreck commissioner, we have appointed outside commissioners, and I may tell my hon. friend that we have saved a good deal of money since the adoption of this policy.

Mr. NEILL: Do I understand that you pick up a naval man in the locality where the accident requires investigation?

Mr. DURANLEAU: Yes, that is what we have been doing, with some success and less expense.

Mr. NEILL: Then to whom does the secretary act as secretary?

Mr. DURANLEAU: We have in the department a man who acted as secretary to the wreck commissioner. That man is still in the employ of the department; he acts as registrar for the commissioner appointed in each case.

Mr. MacINNIS: There is still a wreck commissioner's office, is there not, although there is no wreck commissioner?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I cannot say there is a wreck commissioner's office but in the department there is an employee who acted as secretary to the wreck commissioner and who now acts as registrar for the commissioners appointed.

Mr. NEILL: Does the minister think he will get as good and efficient service by picking up a man, no doubt recommended by politicians, when the occasion arises here and there, as he would by having a permanent appointee at Ottawa who would have some continuity of policy, at any rate, and who possibly would be more independent than a local man who might have prejudices or influences brought to bear upon him? The minister says this policy is cheaper, but is it more efficient?