

## Lines Drawn For Battle When Parliament Meets

By JAMES NELSON  
OTTAWA (CP) — The lines were drawn last week for the first political scrimmage of the new parliamentary session: On the issue of a new government dropping an old government's appointees from the federal payroll.

The case of Ken MacKay, appointed a Canadian pensions commissioner by the Diefenbaker government and quietly not reappointed by the Pearson government, raised the ire of Gordon Churchill, a former veterans minister, who says he will press it in the Commons veterans affairs committee.

Roger Tillet, the new veterans minister, said there was nothing unusual. There were a number of precedents under the former Conservative government, and opening the vacancy on the commission paved the way for appointment of a third French-speaking member, restoring Quebec's representation on the board which was trimmed under the Conservative administration.

In their exchanges, by telegram, letter and press interview, neither Mr. Churchill nor Mr. Tillet mentioned any reason for Mr. MacKay's appointment in the first place, or for dropping him from the public service.

An argument of similar nature was raised in the Commons in October, 1957, during the Diefenbaker government. The charge then was against a civil servant engaging in political partisanship.

**SHOULD BE READY**  
The Hansard record of that debate will be required reading for the participants in the new debate—and they should be prepared with facts and figures.

Nine of the 18 participants in that debate less than six years ago have passed from the parliamentary scene, leaving only Lionel Chevrier, now justice minister, former prime minister Diefenbaker, Stanley Knowles (NDP—Winnipeg North Centre)

and H. J. Robichaud, now fisheries minister. It started with George Hees, then transport minister and now out of the House, replying to Mr. Chevrier that it was true a casual worker in Ontario's Grenville-Dundas constituency had been fired for political partisanship, on the say-so of the late A. Clair Caselman, then the riding's Conservative MP.

The employee—who wasn't identified by name in the debate—had been hired by the previous Liberal government just weeks before the 1957 election on the recommendation of the Liberal candidate who ran against Mr. Caselman, Mr. Hees said.

M. J. Coldwell, then the CCF leader and now elder statesman of the New Democratic Party, rose up in shock and indignation, saying he was surprised that a government employee could be fired in this way without an investigation.

Mr. Chevrier said he had looked through the records for years and found nothing like it. Mr. Diefenbaker said he wanted to answer "these gratuitous observations" but didn't get a chance.

Roland Michener, Speaker of the House and now a Manitoba royal commissioner, tried desperately to sort out a mixture of conflicting points of privilege and points of order.

**BOTH SURPRISED**  
Mr. Chevrier said he was surprised at the charge that he was engaging in political partisanship.

prised at Mr. Coldwell's surprise. Mr. Coldwell had taken part in just such a debate some years earlier when the former Liberal agriculture minister, James G. Gardiner, was involved in just the same sort of thing.

What had Mr. Coldwell's attitude been then the CCF leader asked. Surprise, Mr. Hees admitted.

Then Mr. Gardiner, now deceased, told his story. His record, he said, wasn't anything compared to the firings that went on under the Conservative government of R. B. Bennett in the 1930s.

Mr. Knowles called it "par-tisanerie here."

The debate then tapered off into cross-fire. Mr. Robichaud asked the then postmaster-general, William Hamilton, now retired from politics, whether the policy would apply to rural mail carriers. Mr. Hamilton said he'd have to look into it.

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