

Hon. Mr. BISHOP: If he is a very valuable and efficient servant, probably the government would not let him go.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: If the bill passes in its present form it will be his right to go, and he cannot be held against his will. Under the act as now constituted he can be retained. But if this bill goes through he can retire no matter how valuable he may be, or how healthy and strong. I do not think such a provision is in the public interest.

Hon. Mr. BISHOP: If he should retire at sixty he would receive a much smaller superannuation allowance than he would get if he remained until sixty-five.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: No. As I understand the bill, the full pension will be payable at the age of sixty.

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: Not necessarily. The maximum is obtainable only after thirty-five years of service.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Well, if the civil servant has completed his thirty-five years he can retire on full pension at sixty, although he may be perfectly healthy and in the prime of life.

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: Honourable senators, I think it is important to understand the act as is in order to realize the effect of the changes which we are discussing, and which consist in lowering the retirement age—the so-called voluntary retirement age—from sixty-five to sixty, and lowering the compulsory retiring age from seventy to sixty-five.

There are two phases to be considered. First there is the automatic phase. When a civil servant reaches the age of seventy, under this bill he cannot be continued in office except as provided for in paragraph (2) of section 8 of the bill. It reads as follows:

(2) Nothing contained in subsection one of this section shall be deemed to require any contributor to be retired from the Civil Service by reason of having attained the age of seventy years, until at least two years have elapsed after the coming into force of the said subsection.

Under section 8 of the bill no contributor shall be retained in the civil service beyond sixty-five years of age, but annual extensions may be granted to him until he reaches the age of seventy.

The first remark which I wish to make is in reply to a question put yesterday by the honourable senator from Pembroke (Hon. Mr. White). He enquired as to the attitude of the civil servant concerning the lowering of the retirement age. With leave of the Senate I wish to read a resolution dated July 7, 1947, from the National Joint Council of

the Public Service. That is an association which includes representatives of certain civil service organizations as well as representatives of the government. The resolution reads as follows:

The National Joint Council of the Public Service, having examined the provisions of the bill to amend the Civil Service Superannuation Act,

(1) endorses the provisions of the bill:

(2) expresses its appreciation of the action of the Minister of Finance in facilitating its consideration of the bill;

(3) expresses its appreciation of the work of the Superannuation Advisory Committee, the Department of Finance, the Minister of Finance and the Government in connection with the Bill; and

(4) expresses the hope that the Bill will be passed at the present session of Parliament.

I also wish to present to the Senate a letter addressed to the honourable leader of the government here (Hon. Mr. Robertson) dated July 15. This letter is signed by Mr. T. R. Montgomery, Acting President, Civil Service Federation of Canada. That is one of the organizations I have already mentioned, and forms part of the National Joint Council of the Public Service. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Sir,—

The Bill No. 415, An Act to amend the Civil Service Superannuation Act, now before the Senate for consideration, is, in the opinion of the Civil Service Federation of Canada, one of the most important bills affecting Public Service Administration which has been brought forward in many years.

The Civil Service Federation, representing civil servants all across Canada and in every department of government has strongly pressed, over the years, for such an Act. We believe it to be not only in the interest of the employee but also very much in the public interest. The increased efficiency brought about by a betterment of morale consequent upon the increased promotional opportunities opened up to members of the service due to the lowering of the retirement age will be quickly apparent and most beneficial.

The fact that promotion in the public service is relatively slow and promotional opportunities for the many thousands in the lower grades comparatively few in comparison with their numbers tends to make the Public Service less attractive than it should be to many highly efficient well-trained Canadians.

It should also be recalled that recruitment to the public service now involves many thousands of young veterans who have a right to expect along with others the opportunity for quicker advancement in the future than has been possible in the past.

The above are a few of the main reasons why the Federation has approved of the Bill and is most anxious that it be adopted at the current session of parliament.

In summing up, the lowering of the retiring age will do three things: first, it will increase