

*Civil Service Superannuation*

Mr. MacNICOL: The cases I am speaking of have come to my attention since I came to Ottawa, so that this case must have been after 1927 because I did not come here until 1930.

Returning to the point brought up by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, I know a number of employees in the mechanical branch at the printing bureau.

Mr. McILRAITH: They are covered by the bill.

Mr. MacNICOL: I have known one man in particular for a great number of years. He comes from the same part of the country as I do. He came to see me the other day and brought with him a brief on superannuation submitted by the mechanical employees of the department of public printing. Do I understand that the bill covers these men?

Mr. McILRAITH: It covers their case precisely.

Mr. MacNICOL: I am glad to hear that, and there is no use in my proceeding farther with their case.

There is, however, one other class of employees that I want to bring to the minister's attention. I am speaking of the ordinary postie delivering letters on the street in my own city, or any other city for that matter, but I will confine my remarks to Toronto. He has a very difficult job, particularly during the war because the walks of the posties have been so extended that these men are almost worked off their feet. The result is that many of them have to retire earlier than they otherwise would. I would suggest that the postal employees, particularly the man doing a walk, should be permitted to retire on full pension at least five years earlier than is now permitted, or perhaps even more than five years. I believe that they have to serve to-day for thirty-five years before they can retire on full pension. That is a pretty long time to ask anyone to serve in the government employ before he can be retired on full pension, and that period should be shortened.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Since so many Conservative members will shortly be due to be retired, may I ask if they are protected by any annuity system?

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): That is what you think.

Mr. MacNICOL: If the hon. member is asking me, I can tell him that I will be back here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I must remind hon. members that we are not in committee but on the second reading of the bill.

[Mr. McIlraith.]

Mr. GEORGE BLACK (Yukon): I think my hon. friend has confused the superannuation allowance with annuities. When a civil servant who is under the superannuation act dies his widow receives fifty per cent of the pension he would have received, whereas in the case of an annuity, if the husband is the annuitant, and it is not a double annuity, the annuity ceases on the husband's death.

I think the bill before us is a very desirable piece of legislation. It is legislation that many civil servants have been hoping for, I know, for years past. Sections 7 and 9 of the bill will make it possible for civil servants not now under the superannuation act to come in under the act on fair terms.

Other members have spoken of the position of temporary employees. I know a great many cases of government employees who are rated as temporaries when, in fact, they are permanent in every sense of the word, and the heads of their departments and the government intend that they shall be permanent. This bill should contain a clause putting a time limit on the length of time that a government employee or civil servant shall be rated as a temporary. After a certain period he should automatically become permanent.

I am glad that the Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent) is in charge of the bill to-night because there is something that I wish to bring to his attention which he might find it easier to deal with than the minister in whose name the bill appears. I would call the minister's attention and the attention of the house to the fact that salaries and wages of employees of the federal government are not liable to attachment for debt. They are a favoured class in that respect in this Dominion of Canada. They can go into debt and their earnings cannot be attached to pay their debts. I have known employees on federal construction work to run up bills with merchants in the district and then decline to pay them, and the merchant had no remedy whatsoever. That is not the case with provincial government employees or with territorial employees. Their pay is subject to attachment. This provision would not be needed to be made applicable to federal employees if they were all honest as most of them are, but there are a few who do not pay their way, who run up bills and who do not pay them, and there should be a remedy provided in law so that creditors will have some protection just as they have in the provinces and in the territories. I submit to the minister that before this bill is finally passed he should consider adding a section which will have that effect. I shall have more to say when we are in committee on the bill.