

is the prime thing, and that incompatibility of temper has to be considered. Mr. Newcombe said that the selection of his staff was not unlike the process which goes on in the selection of a partner in a law firm. That appealed to me at once. Amongst technical and professional men, amongst astronomers and men of that type, temperament is the very essence of the thing. Now, if we are going to proceed on the assumption that these appointments must be kept open to the whole of Canada, if that is to be the underlying principle, we are going to reduce the Civil Service in all branches to a low level of mediocrity in my judgment.

*By Hon. Mr. Calder:*

Q. What have you to say to that?—A. My reply to that is that we should not have an aristocracy in the Civil Service in Canada, a democratic country.

*By Mr. Griesbach:*

Q. You will always have an aristocracy of brains, and if you are not going to build up that aristocracy of brains, you are going to have a low level of mediocrity?—A. I think that General Griesbach has been long enough in public life to know that when there is a vacancy on a staff of professional or technical men, for a professional or technical man, there is no dearth of men seeking the position, and they seek it through influence, through personal interviews, through communications with the Deputy Minister as well as with the Minister. So long as human nature is what it is and what it always will be—it is the same in every civilized country—if a Minister has a particular friend whom he would like to aid, who probably is well qualified, and who brings all the pressure possible to bear on the Minister, the Minister will pass him on to his deputy and say, "Oh, put this man on your staff." First there is an incentive to add additional men to the staff when you leave it in the hands of the department, and secondly it eliminates competition. They will not all be as conscientious in deciding as Mr. Newcombe is, if they have the privilege of starting a man who is a personal friend of their own. If that system had not been abused in the past, there would not have been the agitation that there was in favour of the change in the Civil Service Act.

Q. We will take it as you put it. I agree with you that my experience is not unlike your own. I realize the seriousness to the service of the abuse of patronage. But what I am afraid of is that there will be far greater abuses if you have rock-ribbed east-iron regulations for those particular appointments. The cure is going to be worse than the disease, and you have almost declared in the expression of your views that you are going to reduce the service to mediocrity in your attempt to make it democratic. I believe that that attempt to bind by regulations will in the end do the service more harm than even the abuse of patronage may have done because under patronage very distinguished men were brought into the service?—A. I am not denying that.

Q. We have never lacked distinguished men in the service, but under your methods you are getting a number of men to pass examinations and qualify, and they do the work in a sort of way. But you will never develop distinguished men?—A. We do not attempt an examination in connection with those professional men. It is just a comparison of their qualifications, of their experience, and so on to enable the department to be represented on the board of selection. I am afraid that if the present provision in the Bill dealing with technical and professional appointments is adopted it will shoot the Civil Service Act to pieces. Last night, I ran over in my mind a host of the positions that would be included as technical and professional positions. If that provision in the Bill should become law, every position in the Printing Bureau of a non-clerical character will be claimed to be a technical position. There you had a useful illustration of the effects of patronage. From the Printing Bureau we have let out over 400 men, and it is doing better work with 400 men less than it did before. The Minister and his deputy and members of Parliament were pestered to death by people seeking appointments in the Bureau. That sort of thing is an incentive to over-manning. Then all the lawyers in all the departments would come under that section as technical and professional. So would all the principals in the Department of Health,

[Hon. Dr. W. J. Roche.]