

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: I rise on a point of order. Our leader has surely departed from the urbane and kindly attitude that he usually adopts in this house. Firstly, he described the position which I take as ridiculous.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I withdrew that.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: All right. Then he said I poured scorn on the ambitions of young men. I did nothing of the kind. I approve of the ambitions of young men, but I do not approve of their carrying out those ambitions at the expense of older men. What we are discussing is whether we are in favour of legislation which, as it has been said, would make it possible to push old men out in order to improve the morale of young men.

Hon. THOMAS VIEN: Honourable senators, irrespective of the legitimate ambition of any person to enter or be promoted in the civil service, we have to consider in connection with this bill the question of public interest. I suggest that at sixty-five many a man is still capable of serving the public well. We need to look no farther afield than the Senate and the House of Commons to find not a few persons who have reached that age and are still mentally and physically alert. The public interest requires that the departments of government be able to benefit from the experience of capable employees of long service. There may be cases where the efficiency of a branch would be improved by the retirement of an employee of sixty-five, and at present it is within the discretion of the Governor in Council as to whether a civil servant shall be continued in office beyond that age.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: I would like to ask my honourable friend two questions. First, has he any objection to the voluntary retirement of a civil servant at sixty?

Hon. Mr. VIEN: No; I have no quarrel with that at all.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: The second question is this: what is wrong with the provision that the Governor in Council may, if he sees fit, superannuate a civil servant who has reached the age of sixty?

Hon. Mr. VIEN: There is nothing wrong with that. My only objection to the bill is that it makes retirement compulsory at sixty-five. I would like the Governor in Council to have power to extend tenure of office from year to year after sixty-five.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: That is in the bill.

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: Section 8, page 10.

Hon. Mr. VIEN: If that is in the bill, I was under a misconception and have spoken to no purpose. I understood that after an employee reached sixty-five the Governor in Council will not be able to extend his tenure.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Let us not get at cross purposes. Under the present law the retirement age is seventy, but the Governor in council can extend the tenure of office annually for five years. The power to grant extensions has not been widely used in the past, except during the war. This bill would lower the retirement age to sixty-five and give the Governor in Council discretion to extend the term of employment annually for five years.

Hon. Mr. VIEN: I misunderstood the bill. I cannot see any objection to voluntary retirement of a civil servant at sixty and compulsory retirement at sixty-five, if there is provision for an annual extension of service until the employee is seventy. If that is the purpose of the bill I entirely agree with it.

Hon. Mr. BISHOP: That is what the bill provides.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: The honourable gentleman from De Lorimier (Hon. Mr. Vien) has expressed my view exactly. As I read the bill yesterday I thought that civil servants would be compulsorily retired at sixty-five, and I wanted the government to have the right to retain employees, if it so wished, to the age of seventy. This morning I found out that the government has that discretion under this bill. I am in favour of the provision that a civil servant who voluntarily retires at sixty will be entitled to superannuation. As the act now stands, superannuation benefits are not payable to anyone who retires before sixty-five. I adjourned the debate on the bill yesterday in order to look into its provisions, and I am satisfied with them.

The Hon. the CHAIRMAN: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Hon. SENATORS: Question.

The Hon. the CHAIRMAN: The question is on subsection (4) of section 1, at page 2 of the bill, line 39. The honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) has moved in amendment that the word "sixty" be struck out and the word "sixty-five" substituted. All in favour of the amendment will please say "Content".

Some Hon. SENATORS: Content.

The Hon. the CHAIRMAN: All in favour will please say "Non-content".

Some Hon. SENATORS: Non-content.