

APPENDIX No. 6

By Mr. Charters:

Q. You would be entitled to pension, Mr. Smith?—A. I hope so.

Q. You are under the old system?—A. Yes, I was in the gallery when Sir Francis Hinks introduced the Bill for superannuation.

Q. What would your pension amount to?—A. If I were to retire on the full allowance of \$4,000, the top class, I would get \$2,800; but if I retire on what I have now it will be \$2,600.

Q. Do you think it would meet the conditions generally in the service now if the superannuation system were reintroduced?—A. I would think so.

Q. You think it would?—A. Yes.

Q. Why?—A. Because the people in the service would feel there was something to work for and look forward to.

Q. Would they be willing to pay 7 per cent?—A. They would be willing to pay a reasonable abatement. I never dreamed of dropping out of the abatement during the whole time of contributing which was 35 years; although I knew at the time, and we all knew that there was an increase, a very large increase going to particular individuals, and added service so as to bring them up to the period at which they could be superannuated. Although we agitated in the early days to have a fund set aside for the widows and orphans we never could get it done; it became, at least superannuation became a political football and we suffered. The consequence was that, I might mention a very signal case where great hardship is done to the widow of a very brilliant official—

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is necessary to take up the time of the committee by going any further into that question.

By the Chairman:

Q. Have you anything further to say in connection with your branch of the Post Office Department which would assist the committee?—A. Well, there is one point I think I might ask you to let me touch upon, and that is the organization. I think the organization is wrong as it is now. I think an organization which throws all the details of carrying on the tremendous work of the post office service of Canada on one little man is wrong essentially and is a bad business, and I think we might take the organization of the Post Office Department in Washington as an example of what might be done here in the reorganization of our system, so that the Deputy of the Postmaster General and the Minister would deal with all matters of policy, and the heads of branches, as is the case in Washington, with matters of administration, and not go to the Deputy Minister at all, but that they should have access direct to the Minister. The Deputy Minister to-day is overwhelmed with questions of all kinds down to the purchase of a type-writing machine. As controller of Postal Stores I cannot order a typewriting machine without getting the Deputy Minister's authority, and the result of that is that these orders are delayed, they are overlooked and they are forgotten, and the service suffers, and so it is all along the line. The congestion of work in that office is sometimes appalling.

Q. Where?—A. In the Deputy Postmaster General's office. One Minister spoke to me one day about something he had been looking for and trying to find, and some important question hinging upon it, and he said, "Where can I find this thing?" I said, "There is just one place where it is and I need hardly say where that is," and I pointed to the deputy's office, and he said, "It is that wretched sepulchre where everything goes and never comes back." It is because the poor little man is overwhelmed with work. He gathers in everything from Vancouver to Halifax, and from the line north to Dawson. Everything must centre and must go through that particular spot.

Q. You believe a system of decentralization would be beneficial?—A. Decentralization, of course. Would anybody pretend to say that after the experience I have

[Mr. Sidney Smith.]