

I am well pleased that that is not my position. It would be all right if I drove him around in my car and took my hat off to him as I came in, and told him what a fine fellow he was.

Hon. Mr. LACASSE: And gave him an apple.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Yes, and gave him the teacher's red apple. If I were the "teacher's pet" I certainly would be considered the most efficient fellow around when he made his report; but heaven help me if I crossed him in his whims. I do not want to attack the heads of the departments. They are usually fair, but they are also human. I do not wish to repeat the chit-chat of civil servants but I know that I would not be prepared to place all of them in the hands of departmental heads.

I have not changed my mind at all, even after hearing the very able address in support of this bill. This is just a case of pure, simple, unadulterated pushing out of the older men so that the morale of the younger men may be improved.

Hon. WISHART McL. ROBERTSON: Honourable senators, I should like to say a word or two on the point stressed by the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity in connection with the letter which the honourable senator from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Gouin) presented on behalf of the Civil Service Federation of Canada. Last night the seconder of the motion asked me what was the view of civil servants in regard to this proposal and, as honourable senators will recall, I had to frankly admit that I did not know. All I could say was that I had received no representation against it, and that if the opportunity arose it would be only proper for me to place before the house an intelligent answer to that question. I therefore asked my honourable friend from De Salaberry to get all the information he could on the subject. As a result this letter was submitted for consideration. Whatever may be the motive of the civil service is for them to decide. We are only seeking to supply the Senate with an answer to this question.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Will the honourable senator permit me to say that if he is under the impression that my remarks were criticism of either himself or the honourable senator from De Salaberry, I wish to correct that impression.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I appreciate that.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: You not only did the proper thing, but you supplied the Senate with valuable information.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I think the honourable senator from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Gouin) pointed out that there were differences of opinion as to what the permissive retirement age should be. The report of the Gordon Commission advocated one thing, the parliamentary committee had other ideas and the advisory committee had still further suggestions. My honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) has taken a specific paragraph from a letter written by the Civil Service Federation and has suggested that the proposed legislation is based on it. That letter was written only yesterday, and it is too ridiculous for words that my honourable friend should present such an argument. I have no doubt that this legislation was introduced only after taking the recommendation of the parliamentary committee into consideration, and for my friend to suggest that what is contained in this paragraph was the motive, is a ridiculous statement.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: I do not think that that word is exactly parliamentary.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I shall withdraw it, and say that it seems to be an unreasonable statement.

I want to refer to another point. The government believes that this legislation would be advantageous to the public service. It would not result in a heavy drain upon the superannuation fund, and would present an opportunity for retirement in instances where retirement is desirable from the point of view of the service. I hardly think the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity is fair in pouring such scorn on the ambitions of young people.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: I did not pour scorn on the ambitions of young people.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I think that young men in the service who desire to be promoted and those outside who would like to be appointed to the service have a perfectly legitimate ambition, and why it should be regarded as something unworthy of them I cannot understand. I fail to see how the bill would injure anyone, and I should think it would be likely to contribute to the efficiency of the public service.

It seems to me, honourable senators, that there are ample reasons why the amendment of the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity should not be adopted.