

Government Organization Act, 1970

and bankers are allowed to continue to exploit people, to keep their hold on them as slaves in front of the dollar bill. On all fours in front of the dollar bill, this government does absolutely nothing to change the situation. On the contrary, it protects the magnates of finance, and to give itself the appearance of a responsible, dedicated and well-intentioned government, it introduces a bill to increase the number of parliamentary secretaries and ministers without portfolios, as if there were not already enough of them to deceive the people of this country and produce nothing.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the bill is absolutely unthinkable since it is known that it will not solve the basic problem. There are points I would like to return to more specifically. The following passage occurs on page 9, concerning clause 27 of the bill, and I quote:

(1) The amendments proposed by this subclause would provide improved early retirement benefits for certain categories of persons employed in the Public Service, calculated on the basis of the age, length of pensionable service and circumstances of retirement of such persons.

Mr. Speaker, that is part of the explanatory notes. It will be remembered that when the House discussed old-age pensions quite recently we, of the Ralliement Créditiste, asked the government to at least consider the possibility of bringing down the minimum age for payment of old age pensions. We were told: It would cost too much. When the government was asked to allow people over 50 to get their old age pension before the age of 65 so as to enjoy income security and at the same time get out of the labour market overcrowded with unemployed, they answered: That is not good enough, it is a bad measure.

But it seems to be good for civil servants. This means that the government protects a very small part of our society, namely, the civil servants, and does not treat in the same way those who provide the money to pay these civil servants.

The government should at least be fair enough to treat the taxpayers and the civil servants equally instead of favouring one group at the expense of the others. I think that is a sample of an unjust society.

On page 11 of the bill, in the explanatory notes, one can read this:

This amendment would enable a former deputy head to elect to continue to make contributions under the *Public Service Superannuation Act* after he ceases to be actively employed in the Public Service.

Here is another example of discrimination between workers in the private sector and the civil servants encouraged by the government. If the House accepted this amendment, the government would allow a public servant to retire and keep on contributing to his pension fund as though he were still working, so that in the end he might have more substantial pension.

I am not suggesting that those provisions concerning public servants are bad, but if the government considers them good for public servants, they should be just as good for other Canadian citizens. That is why I wonder about the logic in the government's position. When we propose to ensure decent living conditions and economic

[Mr. Fortin.]

security to the Canadian citizens, the government replies: It would be too expensive, it is not feasible, it is not advisable.

This is another example of how this government is running the country. They claim to be fair, but in fact, they could not care less about the Canadian people.

On page 12 of this bill appears the following explanation, and I quote:

This amendment to the *Salaries Act* would provide a salary for each Minister of State referred to in clause 19.

Mr. Speaker, clause 28 reads as follows:

5. The salary of each Minister of State, being a member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, who presides over a Ministry of State is \$15,000 per annum.

—in addition to his regular salary.

● (9:40 p.m.)

In order to prove to what extent this legislation is unacceptable, I will quote some statistics. Lately, the government tabled at the request of hon. members the report of the Committee on Parliamentary Salaries and Expenses presided over by Mr. Beaupré. With little or no knowledge of the role of a member of Parliament, this Mr. Beaupré suggested, without any kind of explanation, without demonstrating that a member could deserve it, without any mention at all of the services that a member could render, an increase in salary to \$25,000 per year. Several members say that such an action is unacceptable because it does not provide at the same time for increased services.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder what services the Ministers of State will do the Canadian people with the disguised salary increase that the government will give to certain members for performing imaginary duties, unless these are defined for us.

At any event, that \$15,000 emolument shown here in the case of a Minister of State is an indirect trick on the part of the government to avoid censure for rewarding certain members, for granting them an increase. Should the government members not agree with that, I invite them to deny it.

I will now bring the discussion on the following point: A Post Office Department will be created under this measure. I have but one word to say about that. We may recall that during the last ten years, the government kept on changing the Postmaster General, almost every moon as the Indians would say. We may recall also the troubles, the problems we had in that department.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the Post Office Department is absolutely necessary. But listening to the minister's speech, we might believe that he can solve all problems.

As for me, I am still puzzled and I still say that this is again the icing on the cake, that it does not remove the poison in the cake because it does not solve the problem.

I should like to come back to the creation of the Department of the Environment. It will be tremendously publicized, with special emphasis on the battles it is