

report and in the bill are provisions to change the Civil Service Act in the matter of age of retirement of civil servants. In the past, compulsory retirement has come at the age of 70 and permissive retirement at the age of 65. When a civil servant attains the age of 65 he is permitted, although his health may be perfect, to retire on full pension. When he arrives at the age of 70 he must retire, unless of course, for certain reasons and under special circumstances, this requirement is set aside by order in council, as happened frequently during the crisis of the war. The bill which is before the house will reduce those ages and permit the civil servant to retire at 60, if he should so desire, and force him to retire at the age of 65.

My submission, honourable senators, is that no good case has been made out for this change. I submit that a man of 60, in the work done by the civil service, is in his prime; he is absolutely at the peak of his powers; and it is unfair to the Dominion of Canada, which has given him the opportunity to gain his experience, and probably spent money in the process, to dispense with his services at that age. I suppose that some of those who are listening to me have reached the age of 60; at least, as a friend remarks, it is impending; others are approaching it: and if that is so, I am sure you realize that your powers today are greater than they ever were before. Some of you may have gone further, and if so I invite you to ask yourselves what would have happened in your career if at the age of 60 you had retired; yes, or if at the age of 65 you had been forced to retire. I say it is not fair to the public which employs these men to train them and give them their experience, allow them to develop their powers, and then actually encourage them to leave the public service, it may be to engage in private business on their own account, or to go fishing, at 60 years of age.

To me the mere thought of such a thing is outrageous. These men are at the height of their usefulness, and it is not in the public interest to encourage them to loaf. It is true that any civil servant can leave at any time by resigning; but in this legislation we are actually paying him to loaf; we give him a pension and encourage him to step out of public service either to serve his own interest or to laze the rest of his life.

As for compulsory retirement at 65, I know of nothing so cruel as to take a man out of an activity in which he has been engaged practically all his life, and tell him, while he is still in excellent health, "From this time forward your time is of no value; you are

through; and all you have to do now is to await the call of the undertaker." I suppose everyone can recall out of his own experience the case of some person who has been active and has then been retired: you have seen such a one, as I have, walking the streets, wondering what he is going to do with his time. I pity the man in that situation. I have seen men who, having left farms where they worked hard all their lives, and gathered up a small provision for their maintenance, retired to town, and died within two years, because no longer bound to the judgment of long ago: "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread." It is no kindness to take a man from his life's work. If I may risk another quotation, I would remind the house of the words of the Preacher: "Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion."

But the subject is a very serious one. The cruelest thing you can do is to deprive a man of the opportunity of using his creative ability; to tell him that, "From now on you are through."

And it is not necessary to lower the retirement age from 70 to 65. The provision which fixes the age at 70 has been in existence for many years, and in the interval medical science and the knowledge of right living have advanced. Today we know how to maintain our health better than did our fathers and grandfathers, and the result is that men are living longer and are retaining their faculties to an older age.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Thank you. We should be raising instead of lowering the age at which people are put on the shelf. I think this measure is inadvisable and I am strongly opposed to it. It is not in the public interest to lower the compulsory retirement age to sixty-five, and it is a cruel thing to impose retirement upon people in the sixty-five to seventy-years class. In committee it was said that the retirement of the older men made possible promotion all down the line; in other words, that the young men would push the older men out of their jobs. That is absolutely repugnant to my thinking. Moreover if the younger men are engineering this in order to get promotions, let them remember that—I am getting back to the Scriptures again—"... with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

These young men must remember that in due time they themselves will be older men. People start getting older from the very day they are born, and young men do not realize