

*Employment in Public Service*

not be much sense in having a notice in English in *Le Droit* or *La Presse* or a notice in French in an English language newspaper. Subject to such exceptions, however, the bill requires the recognition of the bilingual character of the federal parliament and the federal public service in a way which ought to result in some little step forward in our general Canadian situation.

Like the hon. member for Carleton, I am still disappointed that there is not a special separate appeal tribunal for members of the public service who feel aggrieved because of dismissal or suspension for one reason or another. In the committee we did make some progress in this regard. The commission and the government, through its members on the committee, agreed that the Public Service Commission should have such an appeal board under its umbrella, but as I understand it the appeal board is to be an entirely separate body acting independently of the Public Service Commission.

I should like to draw the attention of the committee again to something I said last Friday in connection with Bill No. C-170 which has passed the House of Commons and I hope will become the law very shortly when the other place has dealt with it. I point out that the commission, under the bill which is before us, will be given exclusive jurisdiction in the field of standards for appointment and in the field of promotion, demotion lay-off, release of employees and so on in the public service. In other words, to use a common management-labour term, the whole area of job security is left exclusively with the Public Service Commission with the intention, we were told, that the merit system not be interfered with. As I said the other day, and repeat, I am not convinced that it would not have been possible to make certainly some areas of the job security problem a part of collective bargaining. Hon. members will notice in the bill that one clause deals with lay-offs, jurisdiction over which is given to the Public Service Commission and deputy heads in certain circumstances. Lay-offs are a very important part of job security.

Hon. members will notice that there is provision for dealing with public service employees who show themselves to be incompetent or inadequate for their jobs. Frequently that is a matter of opinion, and the standards in that regard should be subject to collective bargaining. My colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and I, however, as members of our party on the special joint

[Mr. Lewis.]

committee, after discussing this matter at great length decided, as we did in respect of other matters, that the better course for the sake of the civil service and for the sake of parliament and the country was to have partial agreement on at least the things which were conceded in order to see how these bills and the various bodies under them will work out in practice.

I notice that the chairman of the Civil Service Commission is sitting in front of the minister. I am sure he will forgive me if in his presence I plead with the Public Service Commission, in the exercise of its exclusive jurisdiction in the field of job security, appointments, promotions and so on, that at every practical step it consult with the organizations representing the public service employees—the various certified bargaining agents—and make them fully aware of the standards that the commission has in mind to apply generally, particularly where important positions are involved, so that the organizations of employees will have an opportunity at least to explain their views even though the authority to make a decision, of course, will rest with the commission itself.

I say to the members of the Public Service Commission that if, when the commission is established and they are appointed, they carry out their duties without regard to consultation with the employees' organizations, consultation which is meaningful and honest in terms of being frank and full or if they attempt to foist standards, approaches and procedures without taking into account the representations of the employees' organizations, they will pile up for themselves, for the government and for this parliament a great deal of trouble in the months to come. It may be that if they develop a proper avenue of consultation, short of negotiation, with the organizations, the exclusive jurisdiction which they now have will in fact work out well. If so, I will be one member of parliament who will be very glad indeed to have been in practice proven wrong in insisting that this matter must form a part of collective bargaining. I will be very happy indeed if the practical application of this procedure shows itself to be totally acceptable in principle to the employees and their organizations and totally acceptable in principle to the minds of all of us who are concerned about this problem.

• (5:30 p.m.)

I just want to say a few additional words with regard to political rights under clause