

Supply—Secretary of State

tions of members of parliament, regardless of the party to which they belong.

Perhaps one of the most serious things we must face in respect of the civil service is the fashion or mode now in vogue in Canada, that an applicant for a job in order to succeed must have a great number of paper qualifications. I hesitate to cite specific examples, as this does not prove anything, but the one I have in mind is a case in point. This is not related to the federal civil service commission. I noticed in a Kingston newspaper several weeks ago an advertisement for a garbageman. One of the required qualifications was grade 13 education.

An hon. Member: For a garbageman?

Mr. Nesbitt: Yes, one of the required qualifications for a garbageman, according to this advertisement, was a grade 13 education. In my opinion that is going just a little bit too far. I suppose a prospective garbageman must have some appreciation of logarithms to count the orange peels in each bundle of garbage. That is the kind of thing that makes legitimately required qualifications appear rather ridiculous in certain instances.

I have certain notices of competitions for various positions in the civil service. I do not think I need to go into too many examples, because most hon. members are familiar with the type of thing I have in mind, but almost all of them contain long lists of required paper qualifications, and these qualifications are rigidly applied. I should like to know what are the qualifications of the individuals who draw up these qualifications. Several years ago representatives of the civil service commission appeared before a parliamentary committee at which time we had difficulty obtaining much information in this regard. In reply to this type of question these representatives said that the people who draw up these qualifications were experts of one kind or another. I should like to know who draws up these qualifications and who determines what qualifications are required for specific jobs. I know the answer we will receive in a moment or two is that these people are highly qualified, holding degrees A, B, C, and D from technical schools X, Y and Z. I think the rigidity of the application of these qualifications should be considered very carefully.

There is a problem in existence today as a result of automation, which makes it very difficult for anyone over the age of 35 years who has not had the advantage of a formal or technical education to get a job. This is perhaps due to the fact that individuals in this age group for various reasons were not in the

position to obtain the kind of general education now afforded today's students. There should be a little more elasticity to the application of these regulations, as to qualifications for positions. Surely there is nothing wrong with allowing a certain degree of discretion to the officials of the civil service commission. We all have a high degree of respect for the ability of the officials of the civil service commission and our complaints are not directed toward them individually but toward the establishment or scheme of things which has been developed over the years.

Examples do not prove principles, but they do show the kind of thing about which I am complaining. Competition No. 64T1075 for an auditor for the unemployment insurance commission at the London, Ontario branch sets out the duties and qualifications, the number of years experience in accounting or auditing, as well as a requirement in respect of the principles of accounting, including the double entry system, and also suggests that integrity and personal suitability are required. The competition notice then sets forth certain basic educational requirements, grade 11, I believe. I do not wish to mention anyone's name because I do not think that is fair, but an applicant for this job had all the necessary qualifications with the exception of a junior matriculation certificate. He had 11 years experience with one of our principal banks in this country as an accountant. He had also carried on a successful merchandising operation for a number of years, but because of ill health had to give up that business. He is a very well thought of individual in the community. Unfortunately several years ago he was unable to obtain a junior matriculation certificate, as a result of which he was unsuccessful in his application for this position.

Mr. Chairman, that is the type of thing many of us complain about, but there is little benefit to be gained by complaining without offering some constructive suggestions to correct the situation. In a number of these jobs the application could state, in respect of educational qualifications, that such and such a level was required, or the equivalent thereof, and the qualifications of an applicant could then be left to the discretion of the officials of the civil service commission. A great many very excellent people are lost to the civil service because of some really minor technical requirement. I can remember very well what happened some years ago during world war II when officers were being selected for the navy. At one time I had some connection with that operation and I remember person after person being turned down because of colour blind-