

Inquiries of the Ministry

Service which began before last January 1 was undertaken under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission. It was a complete evaluation which covered over 2,500 employees.

According to the reports which I have received so far, I am willing to admit that some mistakes were made and that it will undoubtedly be necessary to correct several evaluations. It is impossible to undertake such a re-evaluation without allowing at the same time a margin of error. When it is completed, a mechanism is then set up which will make it possible to correct the few errors which might have been made during the operation.

[*English*]

Mr. Diefenbaker: In view of the fact that 700 employees of the N.E.S., one in four, have failed to qualify under the new standards established for the service, would the minister not agree that such a situation is unjust and unfair?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question is argumentative.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. My hon. friends opposite apparently do not like any questions asked about the civil service. I am trying to find out what this government is going to do to remove the feeling of uncertainty that exists today. I submit that this is a matter of grave importance. If Your Honour rules that it is not and that the question should go on the order paper, then I suggest to you, sir, that you look at the order paper to see how the government delays answering some of these questions.

Mr. Speaker: I was not suggesting there was no urgency in the matter, because obviously there is. The first question was in order but I was under the impression I ruled that the second question was argumentative in nature.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PENSIONS
OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue. It is supplementary to one I put to him on Friday, June 17, when he said he would have no objection to giving to the joint committee on the public service a term of reference under

which that committee could discuss the pensions of civil servants already retired. May I ask him if he would be willing now to discuss with representatives of each of the parties the possible wording of such a term of reference, so this matter might be settled at an early date.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, as soon as the joint committee has dealt with the rather tremendous task it has in front of it, namely the consideration of the bills to implement collective bargaining in the civil service, I would be pleased to discuss such a resolution with representative members of the parties opposite as well as with my cabinet colleagues, whose approval I must obtain before putting such a resolution on the order paper.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask a supplementary question. Even though we accept the fact that this matter cannot be dealt with in the committee until consideration of the bills has been concluded, would the minister not consider discussing the term of reference before that time comes?

Mr. Benson: I am willing to discuss anything at any time, but I am not willing to make any promises.

INQUIRY AS TO SALARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR
ADMINISTRATIVE CLASSES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Paul Tardif (Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. Can the minister tell the house when the announcement of the adjustment of the salaries for class B employees can be expected?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the house last week, the Civil Service Commission has been pressing forward with this particular matter, and consultations are taking place this week with the civil service associations with respect to administrative support categories in group B. I suggest that by the end of this week or the beginning of next week I will have an announcement with respect to the administrative support categories included in this group, and the commission will push forward with all possible haste in dealing with the administrative groups of the category.