

*Civil Service Act*

statutory basis within the act for veterans' preference in appointments to the civil service; to provide for payment of increased salaries to the chairman and members of the civil service commission; payment of annual increases in rates of compensation to temporary employees; and for the establishment of certain temporary positions, appointments thereto, and remuneration thereof.

Mr. BROOKS: Does the minister intend to give an explanation on the resolution stage?

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): Like my colleague the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. St. Laurent), I do not wish to institute a debate at this stage if it can be avoided, and if the discussion can more conveniently take place on second reading. The main purposes of the bill are to provide veterans' preference for veterans of the second world war and to carry it through into the Civil Service Act, to make provision for the remuneration of temporary employees and also for the remuneration of members of the civil service commission. There are other minor amendments to the act, but those are the three chief features of the bill that is to be introduced.

Mr. RENE HAMEL (St. Maurice-Lafleche) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, before this resolution is concurred in, I should like to say a few words. I do not intend to discuss it at great length, but I believe it expedient to make a few remarks in regard to the civil service. The object of this resolution is to increase the salaries of the chairman and of the members of the civil service commission. I believe that the whole problem may be gone into at this time.

In the first place, I wish to point out the status of French Canadians in the civil service. I shall then show the consequences, try to place responsibilities for such a situation, and finally propose certain reforms. In regard to the civil service, the situation must be envisaged on the basis of population. The 1941 census, volume IV, page 334, places the population as follows: total population 11,506,655; population of French origin, 3,483,038; population of English origin, 2,968,402; population of Irish origin, 1,267,702; population of Scottish origin, 1,403,974. Two facts are apparent from those figures: first, that the French-speaking population constitutes the largest ethnical and homogeneous group in the country; second, French-speaking citizens represent over 30 per cent of the total population of Canada. With those figures in mind, let us see what is the proportion of French-speaking persons in the civil service. Two sources of information are available for this purpose. The report of the Montreal chamber

[Mr. C. W. G. Gibson.]

of commerce which was submitted, I believe, to the Gordon commission and to the members of the cabinet, and a statement of the so-called "committee of five" which appeared, last week, in the *Journal*.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but during the debate on this resolution he must confine himself to the general principles of the resolution now before the house. The hon. member is now bringing up a case which deals with a certain racial group. He will undoubtedly have the opportunity to discuss special cases when the bill is before the house or the committee; he may then base his arguments on certain clauses. I do not think he should bring up special cases at present; he should confine himself to the general principles of the resolution. It is my duty to call the attention of the hon. member to this fact. If I were to allow him to continue, I would be forced to allow the same privilege to any other member who would like to discuss special cases pertaining to the civil service commission. I therefore suggest that the hon. member should confine his remarks to the general principles of the bill.

Mr. HAMEL: Mr. Speaker, I am anxious to abide scrupulously by the rules of the house. The object of the resolution is to increase the salaries of the members of the civil service commission. I wish to prove, Mr. Speaker, that the civil service commission has been a total failure since its inception. Now, how can I prove my point without quoting figures. However, if Your Honour, refuses to allow me to proceed, I shall have to submit to your ruling inasmuch as your authority must be respected.

Mr. SPEAKER: The resolution before the house does not allow the hon. member to discuss whether or not it is advisable to have a civil service commission. The resolution reads as follows:

That it is expedient to present a bill to amend the Civil Service Act to provide, *inter alia*, a statutory basis within the act for veterans' preference in appointments to the civil service; to provide for payment of increased salaries to the chairman and members of the civil service commission; payment of annual increases in rates of compensation to temporary employees; and for the establishment of certain temporary positions, appointments thereto, and remuneration thereof.

Specific needs of the commission are therefore dealt with. It has often been repeated that when a resolution is brought before the house, hon. members can only speak of the general principles on which it is based. However, I wish to draw the hon. mem-