

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Let us proceed with the Bill seriatim, and then we can discuss that more particularly.

Section 1 was agreed to.

On section 2, subsection 1—report by Civil Service Commission upon character of service of all officers of 65 and over:

Hon. W. B. ROSS: We are right up against the only point there is with regard to this. Will honourable gentlemen allow me to read paragraph C of section 2 of the Civil Service Act:

The Civil Service is defined, for the purposes of this Act, as including and consisting of the permanent officers and servants of the Senate and the House of Commons, and the permanent officers and servants employed in the Library of Parliament, saving all rights and privileges of either House, in respect to appointment or removal of those officers and servants.

If you pass this subsection 1 of section 2, the last vestige of authority that this House has over its employees will go; the last piece of influence that it has will be gone; because the Civil Service Commission make their report to the Governor in Council, and as far as this House is concerned there is nothing to do. Now, I propose an amendment, which I will bring in after paragraph c, so as not to disturb the section in any other respect. It is as follows:

In the application of this section to the officers, clerks, and employees of the Senate or the House of Commons, the expression "Governor in Council" means the Senate or the House of Commons, as the case may be.

If honourable gentlemen will look at the section they will see what this means. The Civil Service Commission reports to the Governor in Council as to departmental officials, but in the application of this section to the officers, clerks and employees of the Library of Parliament, or to such other clerks or employees as are under the joint control of both Houses of Parliament, the report is not made to the Governor in Council but to the Senate and the House of Commons.

This amendment will keep the control in the hands of the Senate. We gave way a few days ago to the House of Commons on another Bill touching this point, not insisting on our amendment which was very necessary in the public interest. I gave way unwillingly, as I think other members did. I move that amendment.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: There seems to be a misapprehension in the House, if I may be permitted to say so,

as to the object of this Bill. Honourable gentlemen talk about the interests of the Senate being interfered with by the Civil Service Commission, and our rights being legislated away, and so on. This Bill is only a temporary measure, to be enforced for a year. It expires next year, as honourable gentlemen will see by section 8:

8. No person shall be retired under the provisions of this Act after the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one.

Now, there is a special reason, a reason which has been strongly urged upon the Government, for the passage of this legislation. The action that has been taken by the Government within the last year, looking to the reconstruction of the public service, has impressed upon the Government that there is a large class of employees in the different branches of the service who have reached an age that will not only warrant but require the Government to take steps for their superannuation in order that the most efficient service may be rendered. I am not for a moment saying that men of that age cannot render efficient service; but provision is made in the Bill so that no injustice will be done in cases of that kind. Then there is another class provided for in the Bill—men who have reached a certain age, and who, however inefficient, must be provided for. Honourable gentlemen who do not come in contact with those features of the public service do not appreciate the very great number of men who are in the public service throughout the whole of Canada—a service which numbers something like 60,000 employees—who are absolutely inefficient who are drawing public money but giving no value for it. We know perfectly well that in the past, when an appointment has been made to the public service, the tendency has been to omit to provide any way of removing the appointee from the service. But is it not a highly laudable object, unpleasant though it be to the Government, to have a thorough investigation into the whole public service, in order to ascertain what men are unable to perform their duties, through age, through inefficiency, through illness? I may say there are thousands of such men. If you force upon the Government by legislation machinery whereby this reconstruction will become abortive or be defeated, such action would be a reproach to the Senate of Canada. The Senate of Canada should be the first to hold up both hands to as-