

We are told that under this bill there will be quicker advancement in the civil service. I ask what is to prevent advancement as far as salaries and grades are concerned at the present time? There is nothing in the act which prevents promotion.

In my opinion a man should have the right to apply for superannuation at 60 instead of at 65. As far as rural mail carriers and those who do arduous labour are concerned, 60 years is a fair retirement age, but as my honourable friend well knows, for clerical work the man between 65 and 70 has more ability to grasp situations than has the younger man. We have only to look around this chamber to realize that, the old men—I except the lady members—continue to work through the hot weather while the young people are away on holidays.

It seems to me that the crucial point is this: eliminate the provision for a man to be superannuated at sixty if he so desires, and you eliminate all criticism. You say he is not obliged to retire. Supposing nobody wants to leave the service, where will there be any chances for the young men who are expecting to see the old men pushed aside, to give them opportunities of advancement? I had a visit this morning from Mr. Montgomery, who wrote the letter which has been referred to. We had quite an argument, but we concluded by agreeing with each other when he understood what I had in mind. He said, "Yes, the minute we are able to get our superannuation at sixty there will be no trouble". Change the wording of the bill in this respect, and I will be with you, but if it is not changed I could not agree that the provision for retirement as set out in the bill means exactly what you say it means. You advocate voluntary retirement, but it is not so stated there. Make it so; then I shall approve of it. If you do not, the matter is wholly one of interpretation. Who is going to do the interpreting? Under a section which at the moment I cannot identify, the government "may" offer this. If the government "may" offer, then it may press superannuation upon a man, and instead of giving him an opportunity of choice, of making his own election, pressure will be put on him and he will have to retire.

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: At this point I wish to try to answer my honourable friend. First, there was no bad faith on my part when I used the expression to which he has referred. The phrase "voluntary retirement" is always used; and in fact I qualified it with the expression "so-called". I would prefer to use the term "permissive retirement". Section 6 as revised will read:

(1) The Governor in Council may grant (a) to a contributor who has served in the civil service for ten years or upwards and

(i) who has attained retirement age, an annual superannuation allowance.

Then, if we refer to section 1, subsection 4, paragraph (jj) which my honourable friend from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) desires to amend, we find that when he reaches the age of sixty a civil servant may apply for superannuation. I say that that is permissive. Even though the present bill were withdrawn, as each civil servant is appointed during good pleasure, he may receive a "notice of dismissal"—if it may be appropriately so called. I know also that he may be offered retirement with the advantages of superannuation; and such offer he is obliged to accept. But what prejudice will the majority of civil servants suffer if that age limit of sixty-five is lowered to sixty? I need not repeat all the arguments. Under present circumstances letter-carriers would not receive any superannuation who have not reached 65; but through the amendment which is now before us they will obtain that benefit. My honourable friend asked why it is to be assumed that opportunities of promotion will be created. Well, it is not a matter of pushing out those who are rather advanced on the road of life when they are efficient, but when they show a certain degree of inefficiency. If they are retired, under conditions which I submit are fair and reasonable, places are made for others and the efficiency of the civil service is thereby enhanced. I would not describe such a process as cruel; it is in fact a natural and reasonable one.

Now concerning the veterans. It is not my contention that through these changes in the statute, thousands upon thousands of veterans would immediately find employment. All I say is that they would have a better chance of obtaining a certain number of positions which by this means will become vacant.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Regarding the specific question which was asked by the honourable senator from Peterborough (Hon. Mrs. Fallis), I am advised, on the basis of estimates made in 1931, that approximately 18 per cent of all civil servants enter the service at ages which would enable them to complete thirty-five years of service at sixty. I cannot say whether the percentage has changed materially between that time and the present. If the average age of entrance is higher today, the percentage qualifying at sixty would be correspondingly lower; if the age of entrance is now lower, the percentage would be higher. That is all the information I can give.