

hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) threw out his chest with pride at the fact that it was the Liberal government that had brought in this measure. I rather bow my head in shame to think it was the government of Canada that has let this thing run for twenty or twenty-five years, knowing that this reform was needed, particularly in view of the fact that the Liberal party of which he is so proud has been in power for so many of the last twenty-five or thirty years.

Mr. S. H. KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre): I am very glad to note that a number of the matters about which I spoke on the resolution preceding this bill have been provided for in the draft now before us. I should say that they are provided for potentially. I dare to believe that under the provisions of section 1 of the bill the treasury board will exercise the powers given to it by that section to bring under the Civil Service Superannuation Act a number of the classes of employees about whom I spoke on Wednesday, July 26. I referred, for example, to the printing and mechanical tradesmen at the printing bureau who have not previously been included under the superannuation act because they were on the basis of a weekly wage rather than on an annual salary. In looking over section 1, I find that power is now given to the treasury board, if they will exercise it, to designate those employees as permanent employees of the government for the purposes of this act. I could wish that the terms of the bill had been such that there would be no doubt about this designation being made.

As I have already said I dare to believe that, because the employees of the printing bureau meet the various conditions set out in paragraphs (b) (i) and (b) (ii) of section 1, the treasury board will take the desired action in their case. I dare to hope, although perhaps I am going a little too far in that, that some of the other classes of employees to whom the previous speaker has just referred might also be covered by the terms of section 1. I refer particularly to the temporary permanents. Thus far they have not been included; yet they meet the specifications set out in section 1 if the treasury board is prepared to designate them under that section as permanent for the purposes of this act. I hope that will be done; and I hope that before this debate is closed the minister who is in charge of the bill may be able to give us some indication as to what is in the mind of the government in giving these powers to the treasury board.

Another class of employee to whom I referred the other day was the employee who has a chance to move to a position of a better

grade, but who under present regulations finds that he must resign from the position in which he is now employed and be reappointed to the position of the higher grade. At the present time that employee finds that in doing so he loses the benefits of permanency that he previously enjoyed. Although this bill does not specify this case it gives the treasury board power to classify those people in such a way that they can retain the benefits which they previously enjoyed. I hope that is in the mind of the treasury board and that the minister may give us some indication to that effect.

Another group in behalf of whom I spoke the other day was the many employees who are still under the Retirement Act of 1896 or 1898, and wish to transfer to the superannuation fund. I am very glad to note that their request has been met without any qualifications in section 7 of the bill now before us.

I wish once again to say something further about the men who do char work in this building and the messengers and other employees of the House of Commons, but I shall defer that until we are in committee of the whole on the bill.

While I am on my feet may I say that there is another matter with reference to civil service superannuation to which I should like to draw the attention of the minister. I am pleased that since the Minister of Finance (Mr. Isley) cannot be here, it is the Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent) who is piloting this bill through, because I wish to draw to his attention a case in which I feel that injustice has been done. I make an appeal to the minister that justice might yet be done in this case. I may say that while I am going to give the details of a specific case, I have been told by the Minister of Finance that there are hundreds like it and that is my reason for pressing this matter. This is the case of a widow of a former employee of the Department of Public Works. When he was alive his work was that of a cleaner and helper. He died in 1936. A few months after his death his widow received from the Department of Finance a letter, which I have on my desk, dated December 28, 1936, in which she was advised that she was being granted an allowance of \$143.56 a year payable during her lifetime or until she remarried. That language in the letter is specific. She was told that this allowance was made on the basis of contributions by her husband to the retirement fund while he was employed in the public service. Thereupon she began to receive her cheques, which were made retroactive to September 12, 1936, in the amount of \$11.96