

him when he becomes sixty-five. The amount of the pension is the average of the salary for the last ten years of service.

A civil servant who desires to retire at sixty will come under section 4 of the bill, which provides that the Governor in Council may grant him a superannuation allowance. In other words, retirement on pension at sixty is permissive; it is within the discretion of the Governor in Council. Of course, under the Civil Service Act, chapter 22 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1927, section 20, as amended, appointments to the civil service are in principle during pleasure. I submit that the efficient civil servant will have every inducement to continue in the service after sixty years of age, and that, generally speaking, he is unable to enter private business on a satisfactory footing at that time of life. I will admit—for I want to state the whole case fairly—that it might be to the advantage of professional men to retire at sixty, and enter into private practice but at that age the average civil servant whose work is of a purely clerical nature would not leave the civil service to take up a new line of business.

We have had representations from various organizations of civil servants which indicate that they believe it fair and reasonable to adopt the new retirement age provided for in this measure. Moreover, there are cases where by reason of arduous work or exposure to extreme climatic conditions sympathetic consideration should be given to those now approaching the age of 65 years but who cannot be paid their pensions under the present act unless they become physically incapacitated. In these cases no discretion is given for the granting of superannuation at an earlier age than 65.

May I refer to letter carriers, rural mail clerks and immigration inspectors, who have either to "pound the pavement" or stand on their feet for long periods of time? The honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity protested strongly that on humanitarian grounds we should not kill the sexagenarian by allowing him to have nothing to do. I submit that on humanitarian grounds also, we should consider very seriously the position of the letter carriers, mail clerks and others who under present circumstances would retire if it were not for the fact that they would receive only a refund of the amount which they have contributed. It is well known that in a large city like Montreal there are letter carriers who are deserving of consideration, and who would greatly benefit by the lowering of the retirement age as proposed by this legislation.

In summing up I wish to say that under this bill superannuation at 60 would be put into effect in a limited number of cases and that it would increase rather than impair, the efficiency of the various departments. That is apparent from the letters and resolutions which we have before us. I cannot take upon myself the responsibility of ignoring the recommendations and resolutions which I have submitted to this house and I intend to vote against the amendment.

Hon. Mrs. FALLIS: May I ask a question of the honourable senator, or of the officials, through him? Are there any figures available which would indicate the approximate number of civil servants who at the age of 60 have completed thirty-five years of service and would be eligible for the full pension?

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: I will attempt to obtain that information at once.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Honourable senators, while the answer to the honourable lady's question is being looked up may I ask why there is a jump of five years? That is a long period at that stage of life. Why could we not have made the voluntary and compulsory ages 63 and 68 respectively instead of 60 and 65?

Hon. Mr. GOUIN: The figures recommended by the parliamentary committee and by the royal commission were 60 and 65.

Hon. Mr. MARCOTTE: Honourable senators, first may I complement my friend from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Gouin) on his able argument in favour of the bill. His closing remarks appealed to me strongly.

We use the words "voluntary retirement" and "compulsory retirement," but where in the bill do we find any reference to voluntary retirement? You will find reference to the fact that the government may offer retirement at 60. If the government may offer retirement at 60 under the bill, it will be able to do so under the present amendment. A man is entitled to superannuation at 60, but if he wishes to do so, he may continue in the service to age 65. If the amendment put it that way I think there would be little objection.

May I read a paragraph from a letter presented by my honourable friend from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Gouin), which is as follows:

It should also be recalled that recruitment to the public service now involves many thousands of young veterans who have a right to expect along with others the opportunity for quicker advancement in the future than has been possible in the past.

It is the usual story of pushing the old man aside, which is not quite fair.