

*Civil Service Act*

**Mr. Matheson:** Mr. Chairman, on a question of privilege, I think the record will indicate that I made no such assertion. I did not have the facts and was asking questions in regard to whether the able people we have in public service are being heard, and whether we have enough of them.

**Mr. Bruntsden:** In regard to the question of privilege, Mr. Chairman, there has been one gentleman loudly heard in the last few days. I believe that this government is just as anxious as any previous government to maintain a civil service as great, conscientious, intelligent and hard working as that maintained by any other government. There seems to be a feeling that this government is out to destroy the civil service.

**An hon. Member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Bruntsden:** I suggest that belief is incorrect. The civil service is an integral part of the operation of the government of Canada. The hon. gentleman to my immediate right came up through the civil service. There are times when I become very indignant with him, but he was trained there, as was his leader.

How do we obtain men of ability to serve not only in the civil service but also the government of Canada? I believe if we can infuse the youth and trained personnel of Canada into our public service—I say this with due recognition of the fact that many of my young friends in the gallery in future years may take our places in this chamber—we will have a much better Canada.

I say, sir, that Bill No. C-71 is a good bill and should be supported. It may have some clauses that may be debatable, but all bills have clauses that may be debatable. Let us transcend politics on this particular issue. Let us say to ourselves as members of parliament that we are determined to establish a civil service that will be faithful to all Canadians.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Denis:** Mr. Chairman, just like the hon. member for St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville (Mr. Dupuis), and other members of the house, I regret that the Secretary of State should not be here to pilot a bill which comes under his department.

I would at least have expected the Postmaster General (Mr. Hamilton) to attend since several thousand postal workers come under the jurisdiction of the civil service commission. God knows how many meetings have been organized by those employees in the past two or three years to protest against

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their working conditions, the way they are being treated and the inadequacy of their salaries.

Mr. Chairman, since I have repeated it on several instances in the house, you are not without knowing that every time such protest meetings were held by the postal workers, the Postmaster General was as conspicuous by his absence as he is this afternoon.

How many times have we asked the Secretary of State to see that some salary adjustments to which the civil servants are entitled, be made, when it was finally decided that they should get a salary increase.

You know, Mr. Chairman, that salary increases have been granted by bits and parcels over a period, so that some classifications have obtained their increase before others. They had been entitled to it for a long time.

Now we are today on a discussion of a bill which not only favours the government but the civil servants as far as working conditions and salaries are concerned. Unfortunately, in spite of protests they have made over the years, in spite of representations made in this house by members of the opposition, nothing has been done in this bill to give justice to those who have obtained salary increases some time after other classifications.

Another matter I wish to raise is the fact that federal civil servants cannot take advantage of statutory holidays which fall on legal holidays or on Saturdays. I think that, at last, a section of this bill grants them what we have been asking on their behalf for a long time. But I especially want to emphasize clauses 62 and 63—

Mr. Chairman, you hear the croaking on the other side of the house.

**The Chairman:** If those conversations annoy the hon. member I shall have to ask hon. members to keep quiet.

**Mr. Denis:** I note the remarks made by the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Tremblay). He is now sitting on the other side of the house. Perhaps he has been punished? Or could it be that he seeks to get closer to the government officials, to the whip, or to the parliamentary secretaries?

I wonder if he is not looking for a department? Personally, I doubt that the government will waste its time considering such a request.