

those provided under the Judges Act but which would be contributory whilst the pensions under the Judges Act are non-contributory.

There are two or three other provisions in the bill to take care of the continuation of the pension rights of those from other branches of the civil service who are made heads of missions in foreign countries. The bill will deal with a small number of cases, of which I can give the details when we deal with the bill, to show how each section will apply to them. If it suited the convenience of hon. members to allow the resolution to pass, the bill could be distributed at once and would be brought on for discussion as soon as it can be reached. A full discussion may be held on the second reading, when the terms of the legislation would be before hon. members.

Mr. G. RUSSELL BOUCHER (Carleton): Mr. Speaker, from the explanation given by the minister I understand the main purport of the bill is to provide superannuation for those of our senior servants in the Department of External Affairs, principally diplomats—

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Exclusively diplomats, serving outside Canada.

Mr. BOUCHER: —who have been appointed from private life, not having served previously in the public service. I take it that where such appointments are made from the civil service itself an individual appointed to a diplomatic post would have served a number of years in some department of government, during which he would have contributed to the superannuation fund, and that he would be permitted to continue that contribution and eventually to receive superannuation. On the other hand as I see it this bill is being introduced to bring under the superannuation act persons who have not formerly been employed in the government service, so that they will get superannuation benefits similar to those received by people who have won distinction and promotion through many years of public service.

Take the case of a man who assumes a high post in the diplomatic service, at the request of the government. I would say he would be required to have a vast experience in the type of work he is undertaking, and to be in close touch with and sympathy for government policy. When such a person is appointed from outside the service I do not see why his compensation while in the service should not be sufficient to compensate him for leaving his position in industry or whatever it may be and accepting such an appointment at the

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

request of the government, instead of putting him in the station of those who, by actual contribution, have earned their right to superannuation. Such an individual would be put in a better position than a man who has been in the service, by virtue of the fact that he has not contributed to the superannuation fund, and also by virtue of the fact that he may be in the diplomatic service for only a short time. During his service he may have little opportunity to contribute to the superannuation fund; yet after his service he will be permitted to retire with superannuation benefits for himself, his wife and his family. That may be merited in many cases, but I think it would be a very bad example for this parliament to establish, for many reasons. In the first place a man who has qualified himself in his own business for such an appointment should be a man of substantial means, and as such would be in a preferred position as compared to those who have spent long, faithful years in the public service. Again, while today we in Canada are very much in favour of superannuation and retirement allowances, we must realize that as yet comparatively few of our people have the opportunity to obtain superannuation, even on the basis of contributions made by themselves. One of the greatest inducements our civil servants have is the security they establish when they are permitted to pay into a superannuation fund, to which a contribution is made by the government. To let a new class come in who hold senior positions, positions which carry with them great dignity, honour and respect, and which require the exercise of a real national spirit, is in my opinion not a proper development of the principle of superannuation. To my mind this type of servant, while their numbers may not be great, cannot be looked upon as urgently requiring superannuation. With the social reform legislation now envisaged, and the need for social improvements among the needy, I do not believe we should place on a pedestal perhaps higher than ever before those to whom this measure refers.

My understanding is that if a person in this group accepts a diplomatic or ambassadorial post abroad he is provided with a substantial salary together with a living allowance and the other emoluments which go with a post of the kind. If he is not, then he should be. There is no reason why we should be niggardly in the compensation we give those who undertake positions carrying with them high responsibilities and requiring special qualifications. It is an entirely different approach, however, if we say to men of that type: "If you take this job with its meagre pay—" and we may