

*Employment in Public Service*

Had the Conservatives been in power, the situation would probably have been the same. Stop trying to make us believe that it will not happen. Let it be said simply that the utmost will be done to treat people with more fairness. Just look at the matter of bilingualism. I feel a little something has been done to promote bilingualism. I say a little something because, to my mind, only 9 to 10 per cent of all public servants will benefit from the new policy on bilingualism.

● (6:00 p.m.)

If the civil servant is a French Canadian and his mother tongue is French, he is normally considered bilingual, since he usually speaks English. But if he works in an office where French only is spoken, I can foresee, according to this legislation, that that perfectly bilingual civil servant will not get the promised premium on the grounds that the work he does in English does not reach a percentage of 10 per cent. This is what I think will happen. The work in another language must be equivalent to at least 10 per cent of the workload. I believe that this is not much of an incentive for the employee, for his rating will be based on production rather than on ability.

I wish the ability or the rating of a civil servant were considered instead of production, for quite often, some politicking will influence production. Knowing that a civil servant is bilingual, the administration will appoint him to some unilingual branch, let us say to a degree of 75, 80 or 90 per cent, precisely to prevent him from getting the premium.

This is the reason why I submit that incentives should apply to technical knowledge, to a civil servant's rating, and that political influence, what is usually called patronage, should go by the board.

If we were to eliminate among civil servants all those who are involved in political activity, well, I think that we should start first with the senators. I consider that the senators are public servants, since they are not elected.

One need only look at the last appointments. Why were certain civil servants quietly appointed to the Senate? To do political work; the great organizers of all the political parties sit in the Senate and organise political campaigns. A young civil servant is to be prevented from promoting his political ideas, while all these sleepy old men are allowed to work all year for their party and scheme for

a possible election, trying to bring it about as soon as possible.

If we are to encourage civil servants, we should do so all along the line and use all their talents which they want to place at the disposal of the public, whether in the public service or in politics. I cannot see any reason why we should try to restrict the activity of a capable man. I hope that this bill will attain its objective, but I think that the commissioners must try to free themselves of their old political myth in implementing this bill. It includes everything that is necessary to act honestly, but for one who wants to be dishonest, it is still possible to evade the act.

[English]

**The Chairman:** Before calling on the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke I wish to announce that the questions to be considered this evening are as follows: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), Air Canada—Suggested increased use of Winnipeg maintenance base; the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), External Affairs—Portugal—reported intention to exile political prisoners; the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke (Mr. Johnston), finance—suggested provision of "real dollar" bonds.

**Mr. Knowles:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Chairman, I have listened with great interest to the discussion thus far on Bill C-181. I am pleased that the merit system in the civil service is being extended and I agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Carleton in this regard. As increasingly examinations become the means of deciding employment in the civil service it is important that great care be taken to ensure that examinations are truly valid and test what they purport to test. From my knowledge of education and previous experience I know there is a possibility that the operative factor at work is the frequency and recency that people have written similar tests rather than the tests themselves. In other words, from the test the best candidate may not be chosen but rather the best writer of tests. Though this problem is extremely difficult to solve, it must be kept in mind. I hope that when standards, including educational standards, are prescribed in the selection procedure candidates will know of them and know exactly where they stand when they are writing tests. This will prevent the disappointment and frustration that come from being first in the examination and then