

*Criminal Code*

note which accompanies it. The intention behind the bill is to deal with the various boards and appointments which take place at the instigation of the government, which appointments are for a term certain. In many cases the individuals, as the close of their period of service approaches, are left in the dark as to whether or not they will be reappointed or whether they will have to go somewhere else to look for another job.

The purpose of the bill is to ensure that public servants who are appointed for a period shall be given six months notice if they are not to be reappointed. I am not putting this forward as a tremendously important or vital measure, but it strikes me as an anomaly that the government does not follow many of the practices followed in the private sector of business. If a person is appointed for a term certain, it seems only right that that person should receive reasonable notice if his term of service is not to be renewed.

In reading over the debates when this measure was before the house on previous occasions, I noted the comment by the then hon. member for Leeds and the then hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. Notwithstanding their observations, I still feel the principle is one which is worthy of consideration by the house.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** There is one thing in my mind which perhaps the hon. member might explain. I am wondering why it should be made a criminal offence. Why create in the Criminal Code of this country such an offence? I can understand the purpose and the objective, which I unhesitatingly accept; but as a member of the legal profession I ask the hon. member this question: Why should this be placed in the category of an offence, a crime, against the state?

**Mr. Scott (Danforth):** I appreciate this observation, Mr. Speaker. I can say that this did give me some concern. If by any chance this motion should be accepted and enacted into law, I think we would have to think seriously about it. The reason for making it a criminal offence is that at the moment, because of the multiplicity of boards, acts and regulations which are involved, it would be difficult to design so complex a piece of legislation. For the purpose of discussion at least, it seemed to me it would be simpler to make the whole thing apply personally to a minister. I do agree, of course, with the Leader of the

Opposition that if we were really going to legislate in this area, a very searching review would be required. It would be enormously complicated to make it apply to all areas. I agree that this is troublesome; but as the hon. Leader of the Opposition knows these private members bills are never, or very rarely, passed.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Scott (Danforth):** I hear comments from the other side. You will have your opportunity to vote on it in a few moments, if you so desire. I understand that private members bills are mostly matters for discussion and that as the clock runs out they are placed at the bottom of the order paper.

It seems to me this bill represents a reasonable proposal, and a piece of tidying up which could take place. I believe there have been a number of occasions when responsible public servants have suffered. I am thinking for example of Mr. Carlyle Allison of the Board of Broadcast Governors. According to my information Mr. Allison less than six weeks before his appointment ended was informed he would be re-appointed, and it was only at the very last moment he was informed his appointment would not be renewed. I think this is a shameful way to treat a competent person who has given considerable service to the people of Canada. We all know that the position was then offered to Miss Pauline Jewett who turned it down and that finally it was accepted by a retired deputy minister. I am not being critical of him; he probably is a good responsible person.

This does indicate the type of partisan criticism which this can create. In the province of Quebec, after a rather strange change of administration, it is significant that the new premier rushed down to the radio station to inform all the bureaucrats that they did not have to worry, he was not going to fire them all and they would receive an extension in their tenure of office.

• (5:20 p.m.)

It seems to me that while there are imperfections in the drafting of the bill the principle is a reasonable one. If we are going to appoint people for terms certain it is only reasonable and courteous to give them sufficient notice of dismissal in order that they may seek other employment. We have often heard in the corridors about the difficulties that governments have in appointing people