

the present circumstances of the country warranted, and the great pressure of business upon parliament which necessitated long sessions, justified. If at the start, Australia could in its constitution provide for an indemnity or allowance of £400 sterling, or \$2,000, although we at the start allowed our representatives only \$600, when a change was made the government should have given to the members of our parliament at the end of forty years the indemnity which Australia gave to its representatives at the start. The mistake that was made was when the increase was given in 1901 from \$1,000 to \$1,500, the indemnity was not then increased to \$2,000. Had that been done there would have been for many years no attempt to disturb it, and that sum would have given general satisfaction in both Houses.

However, that was not done, and when an attempt was made in the other House to secure the increase in the indemnity and I understood from rumour that the sum asked for was \$2,500, I said I did not believe Sir Wilfrid Laurier would grant that request. I did not believe that he would go as far as to increase the indemnity to \$2,500, of which I certainly disapprove. It may be said in these days of lavish expenditure the extra \$500 amounts to only the sum of \$150,000 a year, that it is a bagatelle hardly worth speaking about, but a few years ago we regarded \$150,000 a year as a very large amount of money. He would be a bold minister who would then approve of putting the country to that expense without ample justification. However, the indemnity having been raised to \$2,500, I was not and I am not prepared to make any hypocritical fuss about receiving it, and I can only say that while parliament continues to vote \$2,500 as indemnity or allowance to me as a member of the Senate, I shall have no conscientious scruples about accepting it. Indeed, if I had any qualms of conscience on the subject, I could easily set them at rest by treating the extra \$500 allowance as back pay upon the many years that I served in this House for \$600 and \$1,000 per annum.

Coming, now, to the Pension Act, I entertain a very decided opinion on that question. I consider the introduction of a system of class pensions for politicians in this country

to be a matter of the gravest importance. It is a new departure in this country and I believe on this continent, because there is no such class system of pensions to public men in the great country to the south of us, and I say that the introduction of such a system should take place with the greatest caution and deliberation. Any of us who possesses the slightest knowledge of English history knows what an abuse the pension system became in England until it required the giant strength of a Burke to grapple with it, and abolish the infamous system in that country and bring about much needed reforms, so that to-day the pension system of England is one which is easily justifiable. I say therefore at the outset that we should not entertain the idea of establishing a system of class pensions in connection with the public life of the country without the plainest possible necessity for it, and I do not believe that necessity has yet arisen in Canada. If, however, the matter had been discussed openly and above board, and not made a matter of a secret round robin as it was last session, I am not prepared to say that this country would not grant a pension to any of its public men who stood in need of assistance and who had earned it by service as cabinet ministers. If for instance—and it would be a very liberal sum—a pension were given to ex-ministers who had served a certain time in the government, of £500 sterling, our present indemnity, I think it would be a very handsome pension indeed in such a country as Canada. In deserving cases at least the public would not hesitate to give a public man of the class indicated who required it, but such a pension should not be enjoyed by any one while at the same time occupying a seat in either House, and this would shut out senators as their appointments are for life. If the Liberal Conservative party in the Senate had been represented in the caucus of the party in the House of Commons when this measure was brought up, I venture to say that it would not be to-day on the statute-book.

Coming next on the increased salaries of the judges, when this subject was brought before this House a few years ago by the senator from Montreal (Sir George Drummond) I then expressed my opinion very freely. I said that there was a great deal