

the kinds of increases this bill is providing—all the way from a low of 38 per cent to a high of 110 per cent.

In the case of county and district court judges, and it applies to them only and not to judges of the Supreme Court, the Federal Court or provincial superior courts, there is a further provision for another increase a year from now. The chief judges of the county and district courts, who are getting now an increase of 110 per cent, have built into this measure another 17 per cent increase, that is, another \$7,000, in April 1976. The other judges of those courts will have another \$6,000 added on to their \$37,000, bringing them to \$43,000 a year, and that is 16 per cent on top of their present 94 per cent.

● (1650)

I do not take back one word of what I said in my opening remarks about respect for judges and the importance of the judiciary, but I do not see how the Parliament of Canada are talking about a restraint program of 12 per cent, or \$2,400, as a maximum for Canadians and deal with a bill that provides increases as high as 110 per cent now, plus another 17 per cent a year from now, or 94 per cent now and another 16 per cent a year from now. The minister may tell me this is aimed at doing something we want to do, namely, narrow the gap and that it will provide a higher percentage for the lowest paid judges than for those at the top. That is a principle we support. But I discover at the present time the dollar gap between the lowest and the highest paid judge is \$28,000, that is, between \$19,000 and \$47,000; and under the bill—when it is all said and done, the gap will still be \$28,000: there is no change at all in the gap. There is a difference in percentage terms, but the highest paid judge in Canada will still be receiving \$28,000 more than the lowest paid judge under federal legislation.

I do not think what I am saying contains any element of disrespect for judges or disrespect for their needs. They are Canadians as we are. They are living today in 1975 when there is an economic problem in this country. I think they, along with us, should be giving leadership to the people of this country, and it is not leadership to be making a case for very much more than we are prepared to give the ordinary people of this country.

Earlier I referred to the judiciary of this country as serving us well. My friends in the legal profession, and I refer not only to those in our party, tell me that the calibre of judges on the Bench today is particularly high. Some of them feel it is higher than it was. It has not been a problem to get good men or women on the Bench because of the salaries paid. I suggest there are other things involved besides salaries. There is the security of the job itself; there is the security of the pension provisions; there is the prestige and the satisfaction of knowing that one is part of a very important process in Canadian democracy. I think it is a bit of an insult to say that the only way we will get people to do that sort of thing is by paying these salaries that are so much more than is needed in order for them to keep up with the cost of living, and so much more than we are prepared to let others have.

I had occasion a few days ago, I believe it was when we were dealing with the estimates of Treasury Board, to make the point that I think, as do my colleagues, that a

### *Judges Act*

cost of living increase should be for that portion of one's income that one spends in order to meet the cost of living. This myth of a percentage across the board for the person receiving \$5,000 and the same percentage for the person receiving \$50,000 just does not wash. I do not think there is a case for giving those at the top level the same percentage we give to those at the lower levels, but in this case we are throwing the restraint proposals out the window and saying that while others are entitled to only 12 per cent or \$2,400 a year, the judges are entitled after four years to 38 per cent, 41 per cent, 42 per cent or even higher.

As I say, if we turn this percentage into absolute dollars and take the figure of the Minister of Finance of \$2,400 for four years, that is \$9,600, and not one of those salary changes is anywhere near \$9,600: they run at \$15,000, \$16,000 and \$18,000. I think \$15,000 is the lowest I have in front of me in my notes in respect of any of the increases; yet the Minister of Finance says it should not be more than \$2,400 a year, which is \$9,600 in four years.

I believe we are back to the philosophy some of us have, that we should not be building in Canada a society of an elite at the top and ordinary mortals down below. I do not take away from my readiness to provide judges with complete freedom from economic anxiety or economic concern, but I feel very strongly that we should treat them as part of the Canadian populace. I think they should be concerned about inflation and what is happening, and I think the restraints that some of us thought should apply to us as members of parliament and which the government proposes for others should apply to them.

It had been my hope to finish my speech before five o'clock, but I see I will have to take a few minutes this evening.

**An hon. Member:** That is nice to look forward to.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Can I be sure that my friends will all be back at eight o'clock?

**An hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Then I do not need to give notice of the amendment I will move tonight, because my friends will all be here.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Is it in order?

**An hon. Member:** Let's hear it now.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, do you see the kind of friends I have? They say they will be here at eight o'clock, but when I suggest I have an amendment they are not so sure; they would like to hear it now. I shall read out the amendment, Mr. Speaker. This will also be a courtesy to you so that you can look it over during the dinner hour, and then I shall move it at the end of my remarks. May I say that it is a reasoned amendment.

**Mr. Peters:** And reasonable, too.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** May I point out, as the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) and I well know, that it is a little difficult to draft a reasoned amendment and get it past the rules. There has been only one reasoned amendment accepted so far in this