

Northwest Territories on the same basis as he conducts the elections in Canada as a whole.

Honourable senators, as I say, this is a short bill, and I do not think it requires further explanation. It passed the House of Commons unanimously, and as the members of that body are the elected representatives of the country, they are really more directly concerned with this bill than are we, the members of the Senate.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

THIRD READING POSTPONED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall the bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: I move the third reading of the bill now.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Honourable senators, I have been familiar with the contents of this bill for four or five days now, not that I am in the confidence of the government, but because I attended a conference at which the question of the general amendments to the Dominion Elections Act came up. It was the opinion of those attending that conference that these sections affecting the Northwest Territories should be in the Act. I know that the bill was unanimously passed in the other place.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the question is on the motion of the Honourable Senator Beaubien for the third reading of this bill.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Honourable senators, this bill was placed in my hands less than five minutes ago. I have never seen it before and have not had an opportunity to read it, yet I am being asked to consent to third reading. If that is not railroad legislation, I do not know what is. Why not let the third reading stand until tomorrow?

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: I shall withdraw my motion.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Yes.

The motion was withdrawn.

JUDGES BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. L. M. Gouin moved the second reading of Bill 405, an Act to amend the Judges Act, 1946.

He said: Honourable senators, the object of this bill is threefold. It increases the judges' salaries 20 per cent, except those of the Supreme Court of Canada; increases the number of judges for the High Court of Ontario and for the Superior Court of Quebec, and it has the effect of giving pensions to widows of judges.

According to section 1 of the bill, judges of the Exchequer Court will receive an increase of 20 per cent in their salaries. Section 2 increases the number of High Court judges in Ontario from sixteen to eighteen, and the Ontario Legislature is amending the Ontario Judicature Act to provide for this increase.

Section 3 of the bill increases the number of judges of the Superior Court of Quebec by three. In 1948 Quebec amended its legislation, authorizing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to establish up to six more positions. A corresponding amendment was made to the Judges Act, authorizing salaries for such additional number of judges, not exceeding six, as the Governor in Council might declare. Pursuant to this authority four more offices were established, three for Montreal and one for Quebec City.

Two additional judges were to be appointed after proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, but this has not yet been done. I mean that these seats on the Bench have in a sense to be created by the province of Quebec. The organization of the courts is of course a provincial matter, but judges are appointed by the Governor General in Council, and their salaries are paid out of moneys voted by parliament.

At its latest session, in 1951, the Quebec legislature modified the provisions of its Courts of Justice Act and authorized the Lieutenant Governor in Council to provide for the appointment of a total of forty-six judges for our Superior Courts. The amending Act adopted in 1948, which I mentioned a few minutes ago, was repealed, and therefore we apparently provide for five additional judges; but actually only three new judges will be appointed in addition to the two whose appointments had already been provided for in 1948 but have not yet been made.

It is contemplated that the five new judges will be appointed to the following districts:

Montreal, 1; Abitibi, Rouyn-Noranda and Temiskaming, 1; St. Francis and Bedford, 1; Hull, Labelle and Pontiac, 2.

Appointment of the extra judge in Montreal will give us a total of twenty-six members of our Superior Court there. It is generally known that the arrears of cases on the roll of the Superior Court in Montreal create a very serious problem; in fact, it takes almost two years from the time an action is begun in that court until it gets down to trial. As a lawyer I consider it is absolutely in the interest of justice to have a larger number of judges in the Province of Quebec.

The salaries of judges in Ontario and Quebec are increased by 20 per cent. Section 3