

Judges Act

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I heard the hon. member say that in his speech once or twice, and he has said it again now exactly as he said it before. Of course, I was going to deal with it although I had planned to do so a little later. However, I do not mind shifting my speech a bit and dealing with it now. The hon. member makes the point that there have been no increases for our judges since 1971. The amending bill was passed in the fall of 1971 and it was made effective, I think, in July 1, 1971, so let us say it is four years.

If the guidelines of the Minister of Finance are to apply to those four years, even at \$2,400 a year it amounts to only \$9,600. Even if you apply that line, they would get only \$9,600. There is no judge on the list whose increase is only \$9,600: they are all more than that. Giving them full credit for the four years at the maximum figure suggested by the Minister of Finance, it would be—

Mr. Gillies: When was the last increase for judges?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): In 1971. I would prefer to agree to an increase of just \$2,400 a year starting now; that is enough. But I would be prepared to accept the government's guidelines, so that four years times \$2,400 is \$9,600, yet the increases that judges are going to get are \$18,000, \$16,000, \$15,000, \$22,000 and \$18,000. Those are the amounts the judges are going to get, having waited four years, but that is greatly in excess of the restraint proposals set out by the Minister of Finance. I submit that the Minister of Finance might as well leave us.

Mr. Gillies: I could agree with that.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The Minister of Finance got an answer from the Canadian Labour Congress which was to the effect that labour would not buy his proposal unless he did certain other things. He got an answer yesterday from the business community which was to the effect that they did not like his proposal either. He got a pretty effective "No" from the opposition side of the House in a couple of votes that took place yesterday. Now, after all that, if he is prepared to be part of a government that is willing to forget all about these restraint proposals because the judges are a particular group, then the consensus or restraint program is over.

Mr. Benjamin: Everybody is in a particular group.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): My hon. friend, the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), has taken the very words out of my head which I was about to give out of my mouth. Judges are not the only people who are special persons in this Canada of ours. The people for whom the judges have to make decisions are also important. The pensioners, the workers, the mothers in the home, and the persons going into the supermarkets trying to get enough food for the money they have, are all important—they are all Canadians. They are told they must settle for an increase of not more than 12 per cent a year, or \$2,400 a year, whichever is the lesser. But for ourselves in the House of Commons and for those persons over in the other place, the restraints do not apply. Now we are back again this week with another series of increases.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

When we were dealing with Bill C-44, the working papers had not leaked out. Now we have these working papers in public, and here is the government back again with these proposals which I suggest are so far beyond the guidelines in the working papers they just do not make sense at all and cannot be expected to be swallowed by anyone who tries to be reasonable or responsible.

I have already expressed my appreciation for the way in which the hon. member for Calgary North put his speech together, even if I disagree with it. I have to say again that the figures I have on the salaries vary slightly from his. He said he got a table from the Department of Justice. I did not do that, but I have taken the bill and the statute as it is and we seem to vary by about \$3,000. I suspect that the salaries he has been given, both now and what they will be after the bill goes through, are about \$3,000 higher than mine because he has included some representational allowances or some other allowances of that sort that they will get. The figures I have are along these lines: at the present time, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada is receiving \$47,000 a year.

Mr. Woolliams: Madam Speaker, I rise on a small question of privilege. We are not engaged in any big argument. The hon. member is absolutely right, but to his figures should be added \$3,000 because that is the amount payable for extrajudicial duties. The chart I read from has the exact figures which are the same as the hon. member's, to which \$3,000 has been added except in the case of the Federal Court, and I think there it comes to \$4,000.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is fine. That reconciles our figures, but I wanted to be clear that I am taking my figures from the act as it stands and the bill now before us. The chief justice will go from \$47,000 to \$65,000. That is an increase of \$18,000, which in anybody's arithmetic is 38 per cent. The other judges of the Supreme Court of Canada will go from \$42,000 to \$60,000, which is an increase of \$18,000, and that is 42 per cent.

Then the chief justice of the Federal Court and the chief justice of each of the provincial superior courts, the court of appeal and trial division, go from \$39,000 to \$55,000. In both cases the increase is \$16,000, or 41 per cent. The other judges of the Federal Court, and likewise the other judges of the superior courts of the provinces, go from \$35,000 to \$50,000. That is an increase of \$15,000, or 42 per cent.

Let us now look at the judges of the county or district courts, of whom there are a lot more. I appreciate the fact that in percentage terms they are to get more than those in the provincial superior courts, the Federal Court and the Supreme Court, but look at these figures: the judges of the county and district courts are now getting \$19,000. The chief judges of those courts will go to \$41,000. Somebody is going to say I am being unfair. I do not see how I can be, but that is an increase of \$22,000, or 110 per cent.

In the case of the other judges of the county and district courts who are now getting \$19,000, the same as the chief judges, they will go to something less than the chief judges, namely, \$37,000. That is an increase of \$18,000, or 94 per cent. Explain this away as you will, by saying there are some sources of income they will not be entitled to get, against which there are some new allowances that they have not been getting before, but the fact is that those are