

in the country. That is the formula which is applied to the salaries of members of Parliament. The only difference is that members of Parliament started on a base of \$24,000, whereas judges of the Court of Queen's Bench start on the formula at \$70,000. Let me assure hon. members that the results are dramatic. At the end of ten years, in 1990, the judge who is appointed this year will be drawing down \$138,923 per annum. In 1995 when he will have completed his 15 years so as to draw a pension, his salary will be \$194,844. Those poor men and women!

Pension entitlement shall be two-thirds of salary on retirement, and two-thirds of \$194,844, comes to the small and measly sum of \$129,950 retirement pension in 1995, and in some cases it will be 1990.

That is for those men and women being appointed today who will serve their time. That is for the Court of Queen's Bench division, which is the middle range of court levels.

I now refer to Supreme Court justices. Their finishing salaries will be somewhere around \$215,000 in 1995. According to my figures, in ten years the salary increase under this formula of 7 per cent compounded without any of the rest provided for in the bill—because there is a sweetener in the bill which does not apply in the case of anyone else—is 198.4 per cent, and in 15 years it is a mere 278 per cent.

I wish the Minister of Justice or his parliamentary secretary were here to defend those figures. Judges have to be paid well, but outside, possibly, of some of the senior positions in the country such as chief justices and Supreme Court of Canada justices many judicial offices are filled by men who sought them because they cannot—and refuse to—put up with the hassle of private practice. I know many of my contemporaries and men who are perhaps ten years younger than I are going to provincial solicitors general and asking to be appointed provincial court judges. They are senior partners in good and medium-range law firms.

They are men who earn \$75,000 or \$80,000 per year without the bat of an eye, but they will not put up with constant hassles with junior partners who want to become millionaires or aspiring millionaires in the first five years of practice, who want to cut corners and who are not prepared to abide by the standards which have developed in the practice of law after years of experience. Many of these men in my home province have told me that that is why they want to seek the peace and honour of the bench.

If I am to be a county court judge, I start out this year at \$65,000, and with the indexing formula of 7 per cent—even if it is not reviewed by commissions every three years to be upgraded in order to meet increases in the cost of living, which does not apply in the case of members of Parliament—in ten years' time I shall be earning \$128,900. True enough, we do not know what the value of the dollar will be at that time but, by God, where are the rest of the people going to be? The government has laid down this yardstick for the future. This is where this bill is important: It is a yardstick for salaries of senior public servants because, if we look further at the bill, we

Judges Act

see that the Auditor General is tied into this particular salary schedule with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

The salary of the Commissioner of Official Languages is tied into this bill as is the salary of the Chief Electoral Officer. In committee I will find out—and I hope hon. members will help me find out—about their pensions. Will theirs be non-contributory as well?

I come now to the last indecency in this bill. It is proposed that all contributions made by judges since 1975 shall be reimbursed, and any contributions made by any judges who since 1975 have died shall be repaid to their estates. That is only fair if we accept the principle of repayment, but on this question of contribution or non-contribution with respect to pensions, judges are the only ones in the public service whose pension schemes were non-contributory. This was brought in in 1975, effective February 15, as I have said before, but why was contribution not applied to all judges then occupying their positions? Certainly in the fluxion of time there would have been some windfall gains for a few of them, just as we accepted windfall gains when we created the Canada Pension Plan. A number of people did not contribute the nine years as required for full contributions, but if my memory serves me correctly, any person having reached the age of 64 at the time of the act's coming into effect, or something akin to that, would after five years be entitled to full benefits. So there was a windfall gain—a small one.

We accept that because no scheme can provide that all persons shall pay the same amount and receive the same benefits. That is what should have happened in the case of the Judges Act. Now they have come around, I am told, and have convinced the bureaucrats, who have convinced the Minister of Justice, that they should not pay. That is wrong. Some are paying in and some are not. Every last one of them should pay in, and we will find out on an actuarial basis just what the equivalent of that non-contributory pension is. I have made statements before and I make statements—

● (2120)

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder whether the hon. member would permit a brief question on the subject?

Mr. Lambert: Yes, a question, not a statement.

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): The hon. member has referred, I think quite properly, to the scandalous situation of non-contributory pension plans and the refunds of the contributions proposed in the bill before us. I wonder if the hon. member would explain then why it is that the previous minister of justice in the Conservative government proposed exactly that in a letter dated December 20, 1979, to members of the federal judiciary. Why is it that the hon. member's own government proposed exactly the same scheme as that to which he now objects so bitterly?