

down their judgments within a reasonable time and those who are unreasonably delaying judgments. It is a matter that affects not only those of the legal profession—that would not be of the same importance; it is of great importance to litigants, to the ordinary citizens of the country. I am quite sure that there are members of this house on all sides who could point to scores of instances in which actual injustice has been suffered by litigants owing to the failure of the bench to hand down judgments within a reasonable time. Very often judges who have the most to do bring down their judgments most quickly. The minister may expect the question to be raised later in the session, and I wish to warn him so that some consideration will actually be given to it.

Another point I wish to mention is very appropriate in view of the national social legislation proposed in the speech from the throne. We are going to try in this country, and I hope we shall succeed, to bring greater equality of opportunity and security to the men and women of Canada. I am raising my voice to-day not so much against the system that prevails with respect to judges of our courts as against the inequality which exists in respect to retiring allowances for other persons who are just as worthy. It is not showing a very good example to single out certain persons in Canada for retiring allowances up to one hundred per cent, and in other cases, as the minister said in answer to my question, two-thirds of their salaries, and to be so tardy in seeing to it that other sections of our population are given something more than a bare subsistence when they retire, sometimes at a much earlier age. I bring that up not with any idea of being small or mean or making any reflection on our judiciary, because I realize that many men are attracted to the judiciary by the provision for substantial retiring allowances. But while keeping that aspect of the matter fully in mind, I submit we should not single out any particular class for such ample retiring allowances without considering carefully the manner in which other classes who are just as worthy are treated in this regard. I hope that the type of security which others receive compared with that provided for those who sit on the bench may be given consideration—and this of course is no reflection whatever upon the bench.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: I hope that the matter to which the hon. member has referred will be fully considered by the select committee that is to be appointed to deal with all

matters of social security. It is certainly an interesting point, and I am sure the select committee will not fail to deal with it.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): It is no reflection upon any individual to suggest that with the passing of the years it is not always possible to discharge serious and onerous duties with the same powers of concentration as one had in earlier years. This is particularly important in view of the fact that for some years in Canada and the United States the powers of those who interpret the law have been of tremendous social significance to those countries. The decisions of the person holding the position of Chief Justice of Canada, by virtue of the leadership which he gives through his judicial interpretations, have a tremendous effect upon the operation of legislation that has been passed and legislation that will be passed. It is, therefore, important that men should not be kept in such an important office beyond the time during which they can normally bring their full energy and powers to bear upon the task assigned to them.

Some mention has been made of the Hong Kong report. I have no wish to go back into that, but hon. members may recall that I made a statement to this house on July 27 last, found in *Hansard* at page 4794. I said then:

I should like to refer particularly in connection with this question of reinforcements to a matter which affects myself. I note that the commissioner did me the honour of quoting me on page 39 of the appendix. He stated that all the officers had completed their training—that is, reinforcement officers—and he says:

In general, this opinion was confirmed by Mr. T. C. Douglas, M.P., who knew five of these officers and saw them shortly before they left for Hong Kong.

That is one of the things which amazed me most in this report. If the rest of the evidence presented to the commissioner was interpreted with as prejudiced a point of view as the evidence I submitted, I have grave doubts about this report. I went before the commission at the suggestion of counsel for the commission. The commissioner was very kind to me, and seemed to be anxious to get all the facts. I told him what little I knew: that in October, 1940, I went into a reserve officers' training camp with some of these men. These men had thirty days' training in squad drill, ordinary rifle drill, and some elementary map-reading. They had never fired a Bren gun, a machine gun, or pistol when they came out. They went back to civilian occupations and were picked up again next spring and sent to Gordon Head, there to take a four months' course. They were then transferred to the Winnipeg Grenadiers and sent overseas. These officers were naturally perturbed—and I explained this to the commissioner—at the prospect of taking men into action after they themselves had received in