

*Judges and Financial Administration Acts*

bers to correct statements or explain speeches. This has been properly done by the hon. member. The Chair will now recognize the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, I would have some remarks to make in connection with that legislation.

I wish first to congratulate the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Béchard). He made an excellent presentation of the bill. I was deeply moved when he insisted on the necessity of providing women with the same opportunities as men to become judges, according to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and to be entitled to the same financial advantages as male judges. I am sure that the department will accede to some representations of Canadian women to enable the Commission and the women at large to regain confidence.

I was also pleased to hear the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice insist on the necessity of introducing new concepts in the legislation and in the courts. The time has now come to note that even in the legal profession conditions have entirely altered. More and more, groups of citizens are in a position to make representations, even to the higher courts of the country. Therefore, I congratulate the Parliamentary Secretary on his statement.

[English]

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to deal with a few reservations which I have. I must do this because there are many people in my constituency who feel much the same as I do. I do not think that this point of view receives enough attention. I know the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has expressed the viewpoint about which I feel very strongly, but I want to express this in my own words.

When dealing with the salary increases for Members of Parliament, I was not picking out one class of people to be pilloried because they happened to be Members of Parliament. I was not particularly interested in wearing a hair shirt because I am a Member of Parliament. As a matter of fact, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre realizes that today women are not addicted to shirts of any kind. I am speaking metaphorically. I was not interested in singling out members and pillorying them. I was trying to express a point of view. We seem to exercise the most tender concern for people in brackets higher than the average income brackets. We do not seem to worry about what happens to those in the lower income brackets except to keep those in this bracket down to the minimum income for fear of making the taxpayers uncomfortable.

The hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) quoted from the Bible "Judge not that ye be not judged". I also wish to quote from the Bible to show my familiarity with it. I think it is apropos. "To him who hath shall be given, but from him who hath not shall be taken away even

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel).]

that which he hath." Parliament is too addicted to that these days. When we were increasing our indemnities and expense accounts, we were not prepared to do the same for other people who were suffering even more because of the rising costs of living and that sort of thing. I do not want anyone to say to me if you do that, you are just interfering and undermining justice in this country. I was greatly impressed with the statement by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) that according to a recent poll, 41 per cent of the people said that they felt they could not get justice in the courts of this country.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** It was the parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Béchard:** I quoted that.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** Oui, oui c'est vrai. That is worth while thinking about. The parliamentary secretary and others in this House believe that if judges are paid more, there will be a different result from a similar poll. They think that if you continue to increase the salaries and pensions of judges and the pensions of their widows sufficiently, you will find that conditions will change and that more and more people will believe they can get justice in the courts of the land. I am not at all sure that that follows. I realize that there must be a certain salary level for people who are able and competent to do certain jobs. It may be that you do get more skilled people if you pay a higher salary. On the other hand, I am sure you will also get people who keep insisting that in order to continue to do their job they must have even higher salaries. I do not think this is the way we should approach the matter at all.

● (3:30 p.m.)

In my view, one of the essential requirements of justice in this country and of upholding the majesty of the law is that the law be based on justice. But you cannot possibly get justice in the country by continually increasing stipends, salaries and emoluments paid to people at the top and allowing the gap between them and the people at the bottom of the income scale to widen. It was Anatole France who remarked years ago that the law in all its majesty permitted people with money to sleep under bridges as well as poor people, and so it does. But if we are to have a law respected—as it must be—in this country, we must see to it that instead of the gap in incomes widening we must find ways and means to narrow the gap. In other words, in times of economic hardship such as exist today we must assist the people at the bottom of the income scale and defer increases in pensions and emoluments of people such as ourselves and judges. This would bring about a greater degree of justice to those at the bottom of the income ladder.

It is true that we are not exactly in the same position as judges. And above everything, we do want our judges to be independent. But with all their learning, respect for the law and respect for the traditions of this country, if we have to continue to pay judges more and more in