

Public Service Superannuation Act

I do not think there is any industry in Canada that is more fundamental to our prosperity and progress than the mining industry. I believe firmly that the people who are engaged in that industry are the very best class of people we have, and that they are working in that industry from choice and not because they are forced to work under conditions which my hon. friend describes as less than ideal. These are the adventurers, the people with initiative, who go forth to develop our great resources. They leave the comforts of the city and the more settled parts of the country to go to the wilderness and establish new towns, to provide new wealth for our country. I firmly believe that the prosperity of Canada, now and in the future, is very much dependent upon the development of our mineral resources. Agriculture has been developed, not fully but to a great extent. Our forest reserves have been exploited to the point where we are going to have to practise conservation. Our fisheries have been fairly well developed, but mining—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have to guide myself by the latitude I could have given to other members since the beginning of this debate. We are on third reading now and the principle has been adopted. We must deal with what the bill contains, and nothing else. I would have stopped other members from dealing with working conditions in the mines. I watched the hon. member for York South (Mr. Noseworthy) very carefully, and he almost went into that field but he made only a passing reference to it.

Now, the minister is closing the debate and he should not deal with remarks with which perhaps he should have dealt in closing the debate on second reading. Let us keep the record on third reading as clear as it must be.

Mr. Prudham: I am sorry that I was carried away, Mr. Speaker. Speaking to the bill I would say that the mining industry will know for two years what the government assistance will be. This will enable the industry to plan for development as well as for current needs, which will give the stability that the industry has been requesting.

Any mine with costs over \$26.50 per ounce will be eligible for assistance in a varying scale, depending on their costs, with a limit of \$12.33 per ounce. I do not think anyone will argue very strongly that mines with costs below \$26.50 really need assistance. While the gold mines are not paying the highest rate of wages in the mining industry, they are not paying the lowest. They have done an excellent job of cutting their costs, and have improved the production per man day. The credit for this goes to the miners as well as the operators.

My hon. friends have suggested the government should impose conditions on the mines receiving assistance. I believe that on other occasions they would argue against this, or any other government, imposing conditions on one section of the industry which would prevent the free operation of collective bargaining. Any government that takes the power to impose conditions on one half or one section of the industry will also have the right to impose conditions on the other section. I do not think that either management or labour would like controls.

As I have said on previous occasions, there is another partner in this mining game who is quite often overlooked, and that is the investor. Perhaps I am straying a little, Mr. Speaker, but the investor has an interest in this gold mining assistance. I would just say that I believe the industry would go completely out of existence without the steady flow of new investment capital that comes into it. Management has a responsibility to both labour and the investor. The investor, of course—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry, but I see that from the list of speakers who took part in the debate on second reading the minister did not avail himself of the opportunity to close the debate. I think perhaps he is trying to do it now on third reading. I am afraid that he is taking us too far away from the bill. The principle has been agreed upon, and all we have to deal with now is what is contained in the bill, which is the extent of the assistance during the years 1955 and 1956.

Mr. Prudham: Well, Mr. Speaker, I shall close my remarks by thanking hon. members for their support of this measure.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION ACT**EXTENSION OF BENEFITS AND CHANGES
IN ADMINISTRATION**

Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance) moved the third reading of Bill No. 189, to amend the Public Service Superannuation Act.

Mr. W. M. Benidickson (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance): The debate on second reading of this bill occurred last night, and as reported at page 2240 of *Hansard* the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Macdonnell) raised a question with respect to clause 13 of the bill which proposes to extend the time in which a contributor may elect to pay for prior service beyond the one-year period as provided in the basic act. He raised the question as to whether or not it