

Judges Act of 1930 went. It gives this official \$1,500 a year, which is the additional pension he would have received had he continued in office until he was seventy-five years of age. That is the basis of this \$1,500 item.

As regards the attitude of the committee, I said the other day that we do not regard this as a government measure, and every hon. member is completely free to vote as he wishes. I would say this to hon. members, that he is your man; he reports to you and to us, and he has reported to the other governments, as far as that goes. If hon. members think it is important to preserve the principle, well and good; if they do not think it important, then they will vote the other way.

I am not interested in the matter on personal grounds. I do not know anything as to the need of the auditor general for this pension. I am putting the matter not on that ground at all, but on the ground of principle, that when the tenure of office of an official such as he, is shortened, some recognition of the fact must be made.

I do not know that I can add very much, but I would suggest this. The present auditor general has been appointed under an act which makes him hold office during good behaviour, and he is removable only on address of both houses of parliament, but he remains only until seventy years of age. It is extremely important that the auditor general should be independent. It is extremely important that he should not be in any way amenable to suggestions of the government. He must be independent of them at all times; otherwise parliament has no protection. For example, would the house regard it as proper to legislate him out of his position at sixty years of age, without compensation? I put that to the committee because, if this precedent is created, it may well be that a subsequent government might desire to get rid of this particular auditor general; and the moment the continuity of the position is thus jeopardized, the independence of auditors general will be to some extent affected.

I repeat that these are my own personal views. Perhaps I should say that they are the views of the government. They certainly were the views of those ministers who were members of the government at the time the item was inserted. But the committee is completely free to do exactly as it wishes in connection with this item.

Mr. STIRLING: One point mentioned by the minister I did not follow, namely, why should the government now, in 1940, take this view, whereas during the time it has been in office, and during the time it was previously

in office—if one can so speak of an entity of which the same prime minister is the head—it permitted the auditor general to pay into the superannuation fund a certain sum of money which would entitle him at the end of the period of his service to such-and-such a pension? I do not understand why this matter did not arise years ago and be settled on the basis that the minister has explained, namely that this was an individual who was answerable to parliament, occupied in its mind a position which was on the basis of that of a supreme court judge, and consequently, at retirement, if ever, would be entitled to the same treatment as a supreme court judge.

Mr. ILSLEY: The auditor general is entitled to the benefits of the Civil Service Superannuation Act.

Mr. McCANN: He gets them.

Mr. ILSLEY: He made his contributions under the Civil Service Superannuation Act and is entitled to superannuation under that act.

Mr. CASSELMAN (Grenville-Dundas): As a matter of right.

Mr. ILSLEY: As a matter of right. That is a separate thing. That is statutory.

Mr. MacINNIS: What is the amount of his superannuation under the Superannuation Act?

Mr. ILSLEY: It is \$4,750 or thereabouts.

Mr. CASSELMAN (Grenville-Dundas): What is his age now?

Mr. ILSLEY: He retired at seventy, as he was obliged to do.

Mr. STIRLING: He will be seventy-one in November.

Mr. MacKENZIE (Lambton-Kent): I have no doubt that the facts which the Minister of Finance has reported are correct, but the fact remains that in 1923, when this auditor general was appointed, his predecessor, who, I presume, performed the same duties, received \$7,000 a year. But when this man was appointed, while his salary was maintained at \$7,000 for the first seven years, in order to make it up to \$15,000 a year an item of \$8,000 was placed in the public estimates and squabbled over every year for the first seven years. In the result, for sixteen years he received \$15,000 a year, and now he retires on a superannuation of approximately \$4,800. I believe the amount mentioned to me by an official of the superannuation board was \$4,820.

Mr. ILSLEY: It is \$4,750.

Mr. MacKENZIE (Lambton-Kent): The fact remains that he got \$15,000 for sixteen