

Mr. Sharp moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to make just a few remarks. Frankly the purpose of my rising tonight is to put forward a proposal that I made during the committee proceedings and which received general approbation from all sides. It concerned what might be a way to deal with amendments to acts such as the Salaries Act, the Judges Act, and the Members of the House of Commons Salaries Act. I make this proposal because the figures which appeared in all three bills we have considered this year were really arbitrary figures not arrived at by way of recommendation by an outside body which could give impartial advice to the government and members of the House of Commons.

We know that consideration of Bill C-44 with regard to the salaries of members involved much unproductive time and that some hard feeling was created on both sides. The other day in respect of Bill C-47 dealing with the salaries of judges I had some remarks to make about what I thought had been the performance in December, subsequent to that, and up to the passage of Bill C-44. I think we witnessed one of the least attractive performances in this House and outside, in the exercise of that which I would like to see absent from this chamber. That performance was not in any way rewarding.

In so far as this bill is concerned, the salaries of lieutenant governors are being raised to \$35,000. In some cases this means an increase of 100 per cent, but one should remember that this is only the third change since 1952. In other words, there was a change in 1952, another in 1963, and this one now. I think the story is a despicable one. I believe it should have happened more realistically and with greater consideration for the occupants of those offices. I do not think the Canadian public treats the men in those offices in the right way. The same would seem to apply in respect of judges.

It seems to me we would be much further ahead if we followed the procedure adopted in other jurisdictions where the salaries of non-elected people such as judges and senior public servants at the executive level are all tied together and are subject to the advice of a representative cross-section committee of non-government people established to advise the government on what level those salaries should be. An examination would be made every two years. The Committees report would come in and the government would have to act within a period of 60 days. This is one formula. I am not suggesting it is the only one. The government would have to act on the report within 60 days, otherwise the recommendations go into force. The key section, of course, is that dealing with the executive in the public service. The other salaries are fixed on some formula based upon them.

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For instance, in France members of the chamber of deputies are paid at the median average, that is, the middle range between the high and low salaries at the executive level. In the case of Canada this would put members of the House of Commons between SX3 and SX4. Judges are related to public service categories. I think it would satisfy most people on the advice that is given with

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regard to the salaries and there would not have to be a change in the statute, which has occurred three times this year.

Having said that, I would say that that is not an unique formula. I am sure many people would improve upon it, but certainly it would provide a satisfactory yardstick which would eliminate a good deal of the hard feeling that was generated this year, and in years past to a varying degree with regard to changes in these salaries.

I think men on the Bench deserve whatever salaries they get, with the changes that may be recommended, bearing in mind the positions they occupy and the position from which they come. The same thing applies to lieutenant governors, to members of parliament and members of the other House.

So I use this opportunity to make this proposal seriously to the government. I hope that the ministers present will take it into account so that within the next year we can bring in an appropriate statute to do away with the practice we have at present because, regardless of whether or not inflation is contained, there will have to be changes in the salaries of judges as provincial magistrate or judges are brought in, as the cost of living goes up, and as earnings go up across the country. The same applies to the public service, to members of provincial legislatures and of the House of Commons and the Senate.

I commend this bill to members of the House. My only regret is that the incumbents of this office have had merely a change from 1952 to 1963, and from 1963 to 1975. Indeed it is an office where the escalation of salaries is beyond the blink of an eye. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I expressed my views regarding Bill C-24 which is now before us when we were at the second reading stage, as did two or three of my colleagues, and therefore it is not necessary to repeat those views or to extend this third reading debate. I will not even be provoked by my good friend, the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert).

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I was conciliatory tonight.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): He says he was conciliatory, but his references to the debates on Bill C-44 and Bill C-47 included remarks that could lend themselves to debate. For example, the hon. member suggested that the debate on Bill C-44 occupied a great deal of debating time in the House. I have to remind him that it occupied very little debating time in the House. It may have occupied a fair amount of elapsed time from the time the bill was first introduced until it was finally passed, but there was very little debate. However, even though the temptation is there, I will not yield to it.

With respect to the suggestion which the hon. member has just now made to the effect that an outside body should be making recommendations regarding the salaries and allowances of the various groups to which the hon. member has referred, I think there is something to that, and it should be considered. I suggest, however, that with respect to judges and lieutenant governors there may be