

Superannuation Act

Governors. A member of my hon. friend's party, who shall be nameless and who is not in the chamber right now, walked in in the middle of that debate, listened a bit, and finally came over to me and asked, "What are we debating?" I replied, "We are debating the increase in the salaries of Lieutenant Governors". "What?", he said, "I didn't know we paid them anything; I thought it was an honorary position". I thought that was an awfully good Tory view of the role of Lieutenant Governors, that it is a very honorary position, one that they would fill with pleasure, just as some university chancellors accept appointment, for the honour and the service they can render, but without pay.

I recognize the desirability of putting those who have been the Queen's representatives in this country, when they retire, in a position where they have some security. I should not like to see them have to go on welfare. I should not like to see them have to engage in certain kinds of occupations in order to make a living. Yes, I can see the case for pension provisions for Lieutenant Governors. As a matter of fact, I think I can see a better case for a reasonable pension than I can for the high salaries that this House voted them a few minutes ago.

Having said that, and having tried to be as much a part of the atmosphere as one can, I can never get over the fact that special privilege always seems to carry with it additional special privilege. If you are up at the top, more will come. "To them that hath shall be given".

One thinks of the great difficulties we have had getting an increase of a few cents or a few dollars in the pensions of ordinary people. One thinks of the many years persons will have to work and contribute to pension plans before getting a pension they can retire on at all. One thinks of the struggle that we go through to try to get pensions indexed or escalated after retirement so that those persons on these meagre pensions can keep up with the cost of living even though they cannot keep up with the rising standard of living. In order to get a pension that is half decent, most people have to work a lifetime and contribute for a lifetime.

For example, in the public service, where the pension is reasonably good—and I shall have something to say about that later on—it takes 35 years' service to get a pension equal to 70 per cent of a person's six best years' salary. But if you are up at the top, Madam Speaker it is different. Members of parliament can get a pension after six years service; and if you can get in here at the age of 18 you can be pensioned for life at the age of 24.

Mr. Francis: You are a little more insecure here than you are in the public service.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If someone gets in here at 18 and gets out at 24 with a pension for life, the insecurity he had while he was here for six years will soon be forgotten.

Mr. Kempling: How many people do you know have done that?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): In this regard if my hon. friend will just wait for a moment, one thing
[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

that I like about this bill is that it does not allow a pension at any age before 65.

Mr. Francis: No, that is not right.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): My hon. friend says that a pension at too early an age is a mistake. Pensions under this bill, I am pleased to note, will accrue to a retired Lieutenant Governor, unless he is ill, only when he reaches the age of 65. I remind my hon. friend from Ottawa West that a while ago we had an outside report on what the pensions of members of parliament should be, and it was recommended that they should not commence until age 55. That was, of course, the one recommendation in that report—I think it was the Curtis report—that this parliament ignored. As I say, I am glad this provision that the pension is not available until the age of 65, except in cases of disability, is in the bill.

I am also glad it is a contributory pension. The rate is 6 per cent of pay plus one half of one per cent which goes into the escalation fund, compared with 6½ per cent plus one half of one per cent which the public servants pay, and 7½ per cent plus one half of one per cent that members of parliament pay.

After having gone over all the details—and it is amazing the number of details there have to be in a bill to provide a pension for the occupants of just ten jobs in this country—the simple fact is that if you get to the position of ever being a Lieutenant Governor and you hold it for five years at today's salary of \$35,000, at the end of those five years if you are 65, or when you become 65, you get a pension of 30 per cent of that amount, which is \$10,500 a year. If you are appointed Lieutenant Governor at the age of 60, presumably by the age of 60 you have already built up some security, some equity or pension rights. During the period from 60 till 65 you receive \$35,000 a year, which brings a pension of \$10,500 a year for life, subject to annual escalation under the same act that provides for the escalation of other pensions.

● (2110)

I can envisage some persons saying that is not too high for a former Queen's representative, and that this person should be able to live the life to which he has become accustomed in that office. But I still cannot get over the reason I came here. I cannot get over my feeling for the hundreds of thousands of people for whom we have to fight like mischief to get a pension that is a mere fraction of this amount. I just hope this rash of things we are doing for those who are at or near the top will make us face the fact that we should do a lot better in terms of pension provisions for the ordinary people of this country.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

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MOTOR VEHICLE TIRE SAFETY ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH SAFETY STANDARDS FOR TIRES

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (for the Minister of Transport) moved that Bill S-8, respecting the use of national safety