

Salaries Act

provide for old age, then it is not necessary for the individual to try to have the fantastic salary that many seem to think they should have.

I appreciate the problem that this government has, or that any government has, in trying to maintain staffs to efficiently run the business of government. Private enterprise is able to make extremely attractive offers to people who get their training in the government service. But I want to suggest that we have made some progress, even under a Liberal government. We have introduced old age security legislation which does give every Canadian security that we did not have a short time ago. I find that if at the age of 50 I had tried to get the sort of security through government annuities that we now provide through this legislation, I would have to advance \$2,296.27 in cash to purchase an annuity of \$40 a month at the age of 70. I think we can all agree that \$40 a month is not adequate, but together I believe we could provide legislation which would give every Canadian security for the evening of his life.

Mr. Speaker: Order. While I appreciate the sympathy the hon. member expressed for me a moment ago, I wish he would go a little further and express sympathy with the difficulties I sometimes have in enforcing strict adherence to the rule of relevancy.

Mr. Nicholson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I shall try to connect what I am saying with the legislation at hand. This legislation is to provide security for members of the cabinet. My point is that if those cabinet members will bring in security for every Canadian, such action would relieve them of some of the disbursements people have found it necessary to make in the past.

I accept the point of view that if members of the cabinet had not come to parliament, no doubt they would find themselves in a better financial position. But that is true of a great many other members of parliament. For example, my closest neighbour in this chamber is a medical doctor, and I am sure if he worked as hard in his profession as he works in parliament he would be able to accumulate a good deal more money than he can hope to accumulate as a member of parliament.

Then I have no doubt the Acting Prime Minister would have accumulated a great deal more money if he had been following his career, particularly during the war years; but perhaps he would not have had written in his honour a book, "Canada at Work." I find this book is dedicated to Right Hon.

Clarence Decatur Howe, engineer and statesman, and states, "His vision saw the industrial and technical possibilities of Canada; his skill and courage and drive helped to realize them." Then his picture is in the book. First there is the picture of the Governor General, followed by that of the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), and third is the picture of the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Howe). I suggest that having a book of this type dedicated to one does provide some measure of compensation for the money one might have had in other walks of life. I think there can be no difference of opinion on that.

Then, returning to the point that we must provide economic security for all the people before we pass legislation of this kind, I would remind the house of some comments made by Sir Richard Acland, now a Labour member in the British House of Commons. I believe he wrote a book during the war years entitled "What it will be like in the New Britain". In this book he suggested that "the incomes paid for the most responsible positions in the land will not be more than ten times that of the lowest paid worker". He suggested that his personal preference was a ratio of only five to one, but he thought that, for the new Britain, ten times the salary of the lowest worker should be the maximum paid. They have not reached that point in Great Britain, but they have made some progress.

Then, on his eightieth birthday Somerset Maugham had some significant comments to make regarding the change in his country. He mentioned over a radio network that—

—Britons are much better off now than at the turn of the century, when the poor lived in "squalid, verminous slums" and the rich ate so much "they grew enormously fat."

Mr. Speaker: Order. Sometimes I wonder if the hon. member really knows what the word "relevancy" means. I have been following his argument very closely, and I can assure him that his understanding of that word and mine must differ substantially. He is trying to make an argument to the effect that before this legislation is carried we should provide social security or payments of increased amounts to people who perhaps need increases in whatever benefits there are. In order to make that argument he quotes statements made by people in other countries showing the standard of living of people in Great Britain and elsewhere. If we were to accept this kind of argument against second reading of the bill as relevant, then it would be open to any hon. member to stand in his place and say,