

Superannuation Act

Having examined the employment conditions and the provisions of other pension plans which I mentioned, the government believes what would best suit lieutenant governors would be a plan similar under many aspects to that of the Diplomatic Service (Special) Superannuation Act.

[English]

This bill has been prepared accordingly. It will provide a pension beginning at age 65, or earlier if disabled, to a Lieutenant Governor who has contributed in respect of five years of service as such. A deferred annuity will be payable at 65 to those who qualify and retire before attaining that age. The pension will equal 30 per cent of the average salary during the last five years of service. A return of contributions with interest will be payable to those who do not qualify. The pension payable to the surviving spouse is 50 per cent of the pension which the former Lieutenant Governor was receiving at the time of death, or would have received on retirement at age 65.

Contributions are 6½ per cent of salary, of which ½ of 1 per cent is for pension escalation. Lieutenant Governors in office at the time when this legislation is given Royal Assent can elect to contribute for prior service of up to five years in order to qualify for the pension. Any present or future Lieutenant Governor who does not wish to participate in the pension plan may elect not to contribute within six months of coming under the act, in which case a return of contributions will be made.

Apart from these points which I have mentioned, the bill contains the usual number of standard provisions required for the administration of the act. Mr. Speaker, I recommend to the House second reading and passage of this bill.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I had a very quick look through the bill to make sure it does contain the same provision with regard to a Lieutenant Governor's spouse as the one in the bill we have just dealt with; the minister has given me an assurance that it does not, and I think that is the case. It would be a terrible thing if the government were to follow along in this regard. I am glad to see this legislation come before us and I think our party will generally support it.

The government and its agencies have made a lot of discoveries. The CBC has discovered that sex is entertaining as well as useful. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has discovered royalty and has become a royalist, and since he has made that discovery he has discovered that there are Lieutenant Governors who deserve to be paid since they exercise an important official function in our society. I know the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) may disagree, but if you look at the bill, for example, it says: "Her Majesty, by and with the advice of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada enacts as follows—". So the Crown is an essential part of the legislative process.

One could say with a great French philosopher—I am paraphrasing—that if we did not have a Crown we would have to create one because there would have to be one executive head whose function would be similar to that exercised by the Governor General or, in the provinces, by Lieutenant Governors. For a great many years the latter have been compelled to exist in the most difficult circum-

stances, under conditions that made it very hard for them to carry on their job. Some of them were people of the very highest character; so far as I know most of them are.

● (2100)

I recall an incident concerning not the present Lieutenant Governor of my province, who is a great chap, His Honour Lieutenant Governor Steinhauer, but his predecessor, Grant MacEwan. I recall Grant MacEwan attending a function in Grande Prairie. He had a car at his disposal at the time and the people at Grande Prairie were waiting anxiously for him to arrive. Suddenly there was a telephone call to say he was coming up by bus. He had taken the opportunity to talk with people on the bus, to acquaint himself with the people of the area and discuss with them their problems. That is an example of the kind of man he was.

They very rarely have any real duties, but theirs must be a functional position. There may be occasions in a province, such as the situation that we had in the federal parliament not long ago, when there is a minority government, and in those circumstances a very real responsibility falls on the representative of the Crown. I am very pleased to see there has been this recognition, that there has been an increase in the salary, and that there has been this opportunity for these people who exercise these responsibilities to benefit by a pension.

It may well be that hon. members opposite will be in this position one day. I see the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) entering the chamber. I think he would look excellent in the uniform of a Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Especially in the knee socks.

Mr. Baldwin: I do not know whether that will be his ultimate function but I think he would make a first rate Lieutenant Governor. I am not suggesting he leave here; I am just pointing out that hon. members opposite should give this measure their support. We give it our support and I am waiting to hear from my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre, who is chewing on his pencil. I have the feeling that he is not going to be of the same opinion as I am, but I will sit down and listen to him now.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, one of these days my hon. friend from Peace River will make my entire speech before I get to my feet and leave me nothing to say.

Mr. Baldwin: That will be the day!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Let me tell the hon. member—I was debating for a moment whether I should or not—a little story concerning something that happened in this chamber when we were debating Bill C-47 to raise the salaries of Lieutenant Governors.

Mr. Baldwin: You mean Bill C-44.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): My hon. friend has Bill C-44 on the brain. That is not the one I mean. I am referring to the bill to raise the salaries of the Lieutenant