

I am convinced that Canadians generally are genuinely concerned about justice and its administration in Canada. The provisions in Bill C-243 represent legitimate and proper increases in remuneration for our judges and should provide an incentive that will assist in attracting the best legal minds into the judicial system.

[English]

A recent survey has shown that 41 per cent of Canadians believe that "you cannot get justice in the courts today." Without accepting the validity of that statistic, it is probably true that too many people in this country believe that the administration of justice is not all that it should be and that the time has come to take effective steps toward its improvement. The government believes that the provisions of this bill embrace principles that will work to this end and that they are deserving of early enactment.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, today I am in a happy position. As the justice critic for my party I often have to take positions different from those put forward by the government. Today I wish to say at the outset of my remarks that I endorse this bill in principle. I support the government in seeking its reference to committee for study. On the whole I feel that the proposed provisions are good and were needed.

The first matter I wish to discuss is the division of powers, and I do so because a council is being set up with reference to some new kind of discipline to be exercised over judges. I need not repeat the fact that in a democratic state we have three divisions of power. First we have Parliament made up of the House of Commons, the Senate and, of course, the Crown. Then we have the judiciary which is independent of Parliament, and then we have the executive, the cabinet. Each one of these divisions is important. Each has its place and function in society.

This brings me to my first point in reference to the bill, dealing with the increase in judges' salaries. It is well to point out what we propose to do from a money point of view. The principle behind paying judges well is that a judge must have no worries that could affect the independence that he must always exercise in discharging his duties or, to put the matter in a colloquial way, in calling the shots as he sees them. Through the provisions of this bill the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, which is our highest court, will get \$47,000 annually, an increase from \$43,500. The other judges of that court will get \$42,000, an increase from \$38,500.

• (12:40 p.m.)

It has been the prerogative of the federal government for some time to appoint judges of the superior court. In all provinces they will now receive \$39,000, an increase from \$34,500; the other judges will receive \$35,000, an increase from \$30,500. In county court the chief judge, who is like the chief justice of the superior court, will receive \$27,000, an increase from \$23,000, and judges of the county and district courts throughout Canada will receive \$25,000, an increase from \$22,000.

Judges and Financial Administration Acts

The first point I should like to make is that in Ontario superior court judges receive another allowance from the province. I do not know whether I am correct but I believe it might be another \$6,000. Some other provinces also pay an allowance. Looking at the scale of salaries I agree that it is not too much; the job merits it.

I should like to make a comparison of these salaries with the increase in salaries for Members of Parliament. I am sure Your Honour will agree, being a lawyer yourself, as is the distinguished parliamentary secretary, that the calibre of judges is important. At one time a lawyer merely articulated with a law firm, then was called to the bar for five years, and wrote certain examinations. Today with our educational facilities and law schools and academic standards he first gets his Bachelor of Arts degree, specializing in economics or political science or English, then, after taking four or five years in arts, goes on to law school and spends three or four years there to get his Bachelor of Laws degree, and finally spends at least one year articling with a law firm before being called to the bar. He must then spend at least ten years in practice before he can become a Queen's Counsel—wearing the silk as we say—or be appointed to the bench. When that academic standard is compared with what is required for the House of Commons it makes one pause. A member of Parliament may not necessarily have attended university but usually brings a wealth of experience to this place. I see one member sitting here today who has had years of experience in municipal affairs which has eminently fitted him to come to this chamber and do his job. When one considers what we are paid, the increases proposed for judges are not out of line.

We hear a great deal about free office space for Members of Parliament. But a judge's chambers or office are supplied by the provincial government. My office here in the west block does not belong to Eldon Woolliams; it belongs to the people of Canada. The people come there to see me as the representative of Calgary North or, basically, a representative of the House of Commons representing the people of Canada. That should be my first concern, representing the nation as a whole. The office of a judge or a Member of Parliament should be provided by the state and belong to the state.

Judges are entitled to expenses if it is necessary for them to travel from one city to another. In Alberta, our Court of Appeal sits in both Calgary and in Edmonton. Expenses incurred for accommodation and meals are legitimate.

The three levels of government are important, that is, Parliament—and this House of Commons is part of Parliament—, the judiciary and the cabinet. Each plays its part and each is skilled to that end. No one man has it all; each is needed by the others, and that should be emphasized.

Considering the responsibility of the office and the high taxes incurred, the salary and expense allowances are by no means too high. As we all know, anyone who earns more than \$25,000 a year pays taxes of 50 cents on every dollar over the \$25,000, and I know something about that. There is not too much left of the \$47,000, a little more than half, the remainder returning to the treasury. It