

the absence of such contribution. The cases to which the Minister of Justice referred are striking illustrations of that. I mentioned to the minister on one occasion the cases of three or four widows I knew; they were the widows of judges who had educated their families and who had had just sufficient money with the limited salaries that judges secured to be able to live decently and perhaps to leave nothing behind them. There was no right to a pension on the part of the widow and there was no right to a pension on the part of the constable's widow. There was no contract between the judge and the state that his widow would get a pension; neither was there a contract between the constable and the state that the constable's widow would receive a pension, so that they stood in exactly the same position. On more than one occasion I have had to consider the matter with a great deal of care because I did not wish to become a party to selecting one person as the recipient of a pension in the absence of any given principle; being unable to apply a principle to the allotment of pensions, the matter gets down to a discriminatory level. That may not be a pleasant expression to use, but it is a fact. In connection with the police force, the minister was good enough to say the other day that I had brought to his attention the cases of several who would be affected by this legislation. The principle is that prior to a certain date they receive a salary with a bonus, and during that period of time a number of them take their retiring allowances or pensions on the basis, as the statute then stood, of the salary without a bonus. Subsequently bonus has been added to the salary as a permanent yearly compensation. This bill places those who retired after that date on a par with those who retired prior to it; it affects a limited number of persons. In 1924 the whole Pension Act was changed and constables, staff sergeants and sergeants found their pensions increased from 100 to 150 per cent. That was an adjustment based upon the application of the principle that having increased the basis for pension in the contract for service between a certain number of people at a given date, it was in the interests of fair play and even justice to all that those who had served in days gone by should have their pensions adjusted on the same principle. I was directing the attention of the minister to some of those who apparently felt that they were not affected in either case, and looking at the list I cannot see the names of the men who have been bringing the matter to my attention. I am going to endeavour to obtain further informa-

tion, because obviously it cannot be dealt with in this bill in any event, and I shall write the minister accordingly.

I should say to my hon. friends from Macleod and Winnipeg North Centre that I have felt the very serious character of the principle involved in endeavouring to provide pensions for widows where no contributions have been made to the state by their deceased husbands. The Minister of Justice has brought to the attention of this committee one case, and I know of at least four or five others. How can you say that parliament shall single out widows of a particular class for special treatment without touching them all? That has been my difficulty always. I should suggest that hereafter in the contract of service for constables in the police, they be enabled to make some contribution so that in the event of their death a portion of that pension may be continued to their widows. That is the only solution I can offer to the minister and I think on reflection it will be the only solution that any of my hon. friends to my left could offer, for certainly we do not want to have the members of parliament bombarded with requests and the government on the eve of an election or at some other time, asked to yield to pressure in cases which may be very deserving and which may involve extreme hardship but which will necessitate the departure from a principle.

My hon. friend the Minister of the Interior and I were just talking about a particular case which we have had in mind for many years, and the only method by which that case could be dealt with would be to bring in a bill naming that person, who is an old pioneer. He never availed himself of his statutory rights; he never was in a position to do so because he did not serve for a sufficient number of years to secure them. Therefore I think this committee, despite the fact that it does seem to be a matter of very great hardship, should remember that when we are asked to provide money from the Dominion treasury for specific cases, where there has been no contribution by the husband or by anyone, we are opening the door to a bombardment of more cases than I should like to think of at the moment. It gives me a very great deal of difficulty in some instances because of the hardships involved, but in the other hand I think we might fairly amend our contract in the future to provide that hereafter the contributions shall be available for one purpose only, and that is in order to take care of the widow and children by way of pension in the event of the death of the husband. He is assured of his own pension in any case, and if