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Title:

Broadcast script (handwritten) re public service superannuation

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Good evening.

Last week the Public Service Association protested at the present position in Superannuation for civil servants in South Australia - and well they might. We have a new class of poor in this State - the superannuated civil servants, and for many of them the ~~peace~~ ^{reward} of long years of work for the community, of thrift and care, has proved to be ~~as~~ a period of retirement in penury or in circumstances straitened far beyond their worst nightmares.

This is the lot of people who went into the Public Service encouraged by promises of security through Superannuation. They took the maximum number of units for Superannuation they were allowed to take in the positions they occupied, anticipating that when they retired they would be able to lead a quiet life of modest comfort. But inflation robbed their pension units of their purchasing power, so that now they find the pension for which they had contracted will buy nothing like what it would have bought in the days when they arranged for the subscription to the pension.

Many superannuated civil servants are prevented from getting the age pension because of their superannuation savings, yet are left in a position worse than some age pensioners.

What is more, the existing position in South Australia for current subscribers to the pension is worse than in other States.

The Public Service Association rightly claims that ~~the~~ S. A. public servants are in many instances ~~for~~ paying hundreds of pounds more for their pensions than members of other State public services in the Commonwealth Public Service. They take as an example that £100/- of pension units at the age of 30 costs a S. A. public servant £8/10/2 per annum - the same in the Commonwealth or ~~any~~ other States are charging. The comparable figures are Tasmania £8/5/-, Q. £7/14/2, W. A. £6/12/3, Vic. £6/7/4 and Commonwealth £6/4/9.

The Government reply is that the Actuary has reported that the present subscription rates are needed to maintain the fund solvent as against the possible claims on it. The Fund has been increasing in value yearly by amounts from £900,000 to £1,000,000, and is by no means insolvent. Surely the case is fair that if inflation takes place the purchasing power of the pension ought to be maintained by the community, and that as far as subscription rates are concerned, our civil servants ought to be at least in a comparable position with the average of the other States of the Commonwealth.

But the present S. A. Govt. has reportedly refused to carry out demands to put both these principles into effect. Inflation has been allowed to rob superannuation of its purchasing power, and no fair adjustments

To pension subscription rates have been made.

The Opposition is in an unfortunate position on this matter since it is ~~prevented~~ prevented from introducing a measure into Parliament to give effect to its views.

Under our constitution only the Govt. can introduce measures which directly provide for the spending of public money.

The only way in which the Labor Party can air its views in the House is to propose a motion that in the view of the House the basis of superannuation payments & subscriptions should be changed.

In 1958 the A.L.P. moved such a motion & the Premier induced us to withdraw it by promising that he would introduce a measure himself which would give some relief.

When, however, that measure was introduced, we found it only contained three things:-

(1) Some very slight increase in pension to widows & ^{orphans} children of superannuated persons.

When I tell you that as a result of the amendments, a dependent child would receive the princely sum of £26 a year, you will see how inadequate that was.

(2.) All pension ^{payments since} prior to 1949 were increased - but by less than would maintain their purchasing power.

(3.) Additional pension units could be subscribed for - but by those in the topmost ranks of the public service. The men who needed most relief, the people on the middle & lower income scales - got no relief at all.

Those who had retired since 1949, though their pension in many cases had depreciated in value through inflation got no relief either.

I think it is fair to say that the civil servants on this matter are asking for no more than justice. They should not receive less, and if this involves some slightly increased expenditure on the part of the community - that is not a matter of generosity - it is a matter of duty.

Goodnight,

[3588]

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Last week the Public Service Association protested at the present position in Superannuation for civil servants in South Australia – and well they might. We have a new class of poor in this State – the superannuated civil servants, and for many of them the reward of many years of work for the community, of thrift and care, has proved to be a period of retirement in penury or in circumstances far beyond their worst nightmares.

This is the lot of people who went into the Public Service encouraged by promises of security through Superannuation. They took the maximum number of superannuation units they were allowed to take in the positions they occupied, anticipating that when they retired they would be able to lead a quiet life of modest comfort. But inflation robbed their pension units of their purchasing power, so that now they find the position for which they had contracted will buy nothing like what it would have bought in the days when they arranged for the subscription to the premium.

Many superannuated civil servants are prevented from getting the age pension because of their superannuation and savings, yet are left in a position worse than some age pensioners.

What is more, the existing position in South Australia for current subscribers to the pension is worse than in other states.

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The Public Service Association rightly claims that SA public servants are in many instances paying hundreds of pounds more for their pensions than members of other State public services & the Commonwealth Public Service. They take as an example that £100/- of pension units at the age of 30 costs a S.A. public servant £8/10/2 per annum – more than the Commonwealth or other States are charging. The comparable figures are Tasmania £8/5/-, Q. £7/14/2, W.A. £6/12/3, Vic. £6/7/1 and Commonwealth £6/4/9.

The Commonwealth reply is that the Actuary has reported that the present subscription rates are needed to maintain the fund solvent as organised the possible claims on it. The Fund has been increasing in value yearly by amounts from £900,000 to £1,000,000, and is by no means insolvent. Surely the case is fair that if inflation takes place the purchasing power of the pension ought to be ought to be at least in a comparable position with the average of the other States & the Commonwealth.

But the present S.A. Govt. has repeatedly refused to carry out demands to put both these principles into effect. Inflation has been allowed to rob superannuation of its purchasing power, and no fair adjustments

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To pension subscription rates have been made.

The Opposition is in an unfortunate position on this matter since it is prevented from introducing a measure into Parliament to give effect to its views. Under our Constitution only the Govt. can introduce measures which directly provide for the spending of public monies.

The only way in which the Labor Party can air its views in the House is to propose a motion that in the view of the House the basis of superannuation payments & subscriptions should be changed.

In 1958 the ALP moved such a motion & the Premier induced us to withdraw it by promising that he would introduce measures himself which would give some relief. When, however, this measure was introduced, we found it only contained three things –

- 1) Some very slight increase on pension to widows & infant children of superannuated civil servants. When I tell you that as a result of the amendment, a dependent child would receive the princely sum of £26 a year, you will see how inadequate that was.
- 2) All pensions payable prior to January 1949 were increased – but by less than would maintain their purchasing power.
- 3) Additional pension units could be subscribed for – but by those in the topmost ranks of the public service. The men who needed most relief, the people on the middle and lower income scales – got no relief at all.

NEW PAGE

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Goodnight.