

Sixth, it is unbelievable that the government does not mention, and even refuses to mention, that a research assistant will be supplied to each member so that he can better discharge his responsibilities.

Seventh, we find it unacceptable for the government to deal in the same bill with members of Parliament and Members of the other House. We sincerely suggest that the Senate should be abolished immediately. Therefore there is no question of us accepting to vote them increased salaries and allowances.

Not only do we refuse to increase the senators' salaries and allowances but we call for the immediate abolition of the Senate, for in spite of all the respect due to its members it is an antiquated institution which has no justification any more and which irritates, and we can understand that, the Canadian taxpayers by its inaction, its ineffectiveness and its uselessness. Why would the government not do away with that institution? We get no reply from the government. Instead of answering, the Prime Minister wants to increase their salaries and allowances.

Mr. Speaker, we must absolutely give new vigour to Parliament in 1971, bring it closer to the people, modernize our parliamentary and democratic institutions. We must update them and make them more modern, human and effective. Let us start right away by doing away with the Senate. Let us then provide members with the facilities they need to discharge effectively their responsibilities.

As far as we, the Ralliement créditiste, are concerned, we are ready. I quote from page 24 of the Beaupré report:

It seems self-evident that no taxpayer would employ a tradesman or a professional man unless he were satisfied that the individual had available to him the tools with which to do the job at hand.

In other words, the 1971 member of Parliament has the same tools as the 1950 member. It should not therefore come as a surprise that the Canadian people are dissatisfied and wonder—and rightly so in most cases—what their member is doing.

Mr. Speaker, many people rightly ask this question when they are represented by people who indulge in making charges against other members without identifying themselves.

What is more urgent? Increasing salaries or improving work conditions of members? This is the question that we have to answer and the Prime Minister and his Government have chosen to increase parliamentary allowances. We choose, as honestly as these people say, an improvement of services. We must get Parliament nearer to the people by making government services available to all Canadians, and by revamping the important role of members of Parliament through a modern approach. This is why we say that secretarial support, both in the constituency and in Parliament should be improved, and my colleagues will come back to this matter during the debate. That is why we say that every member of Parliament should have at his disposal a researcher and at least two offices in Ottawa.

Senate and House of Commons Act

At present, four of us are crammed into this tiny office of mine. None of my colleagues is better off. Mr. Speaker, this must change in 1971, otherwise the member of Parliament, regardless of his party, will no longer be in a position to adequately discharge the various exacting responsibilities assigned to him in his capacity as an advisor, a protector of the people and a liaison officer, for he is here to serve the public.

Mr. Speaker, it is therefore our intention to oppose the proposal to increase salaries of members of Parliament because that in no way settles the problem and only makes for increased dissatisfaction not only of the people but of those members who want to carry out their duties.

Just think, for instance, that each member of the Quebec National Assembly has a permanent office in his riding, with a permanent secretary, in order to better serve his constituents. On the other hand, there are 75 members in the House of Commons, who come from Quebec. Now, in the federal riding of Lotbinière, for instance, there are three provincial representatives, provided with three secretaries and three permanent offices, all paid for by the government. Why? In order to provide permanent, continuing service in the riding even at times when the member is sitting at the National Assembly.

The same applies in all ridings.

At the federal level, to serve the same population and almost the same number of parishes, I am alone with my wife. To serve the population well, I had to set up an office, for which I pay out of my own pocket, because I believe in the role of the member of Parliament and because I believe the people are entitled to their member's services. All my colleagues have done exactly the same.

Every week end, I see in my office at Victoriaville an average of 40 persons,—which can be easily proven. It is also true for my colleagues. It is an important thing.

At the provincial level, the same population has six persons at its service while at the federal level, where there are over 375,000 civil servants, while we administer a budget of over \$14 billion, there are only two persons in each riding, the member and his wife to look after the electors. It is ridiculous, in 1971, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure you agree with me.

Hon. members of this House upon whom rests the heavy and complex responsibility of defending the rights and the interests of the citizens and of running the country's business often lack the necessary means of action to play their roles efficiently. The government does not seem to have deemed advisable to make these means available to them. From the statements of the right hon. Prime Minister and the President of the Privy Council, once more we come to the conclusion that the government does not deem appropriate to provide the people and the members of this House with these services. Or perhaps in view of their financial situation hon. members could not afford them. In many cases, it is true.

However, I must say that my colleagues and I have given ourselves these tools, in spite of the carelessness of the government, even though we had to spend money to