

Supply—Legislation

that moment, then the important excerpts of the debate might be played back for his benefit and, with this knowledge, he could come into the house and take part in the debate.

I have very sincere feelings on this matter. I have spent many years in the House of Commons, all of the years when the former prime minister, Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, was occupying that position. Members who were in the house at that time will know that the former prime minister was a faithful attendant and spent a large part of his time in this house.

I often asked myself the question; how can the prime minister take so much time to be in his place in the house and spend many hours here? Evening after evening the former prime minister, if he was not in his own seat in this house was nevertheless in the chamber. If one of his ministers was conducting departmental matters the former prime minister would be probably in one of the back rows listening very carefully to what was going on.

I think those many long hours that he spent in this house were not a waste of time. They enabled him to conduct better the position of prime minister. I hope our Prime Minister of today will read the remarks that have been made in this debate, if he is not listening to them, and will give them a great deal of attention. I should hope that he would consider whether or not such a device was in fact helpful to the conduct of his office as Prime Minister.

It would be my opinion that a prime minister who occupied his seat in this house for long periods of time would gain a far greater sense of what was the feeling of the House of Commons on any given subject and would, because of his extended attendance in the house, be able to discharge his all-important duties more efficiently than he can by attempting to discharge them in some other way.

Mr. Fisher: I wanted to make some remarks and ask questions in connection with the library of parliament. I suppose I can ask my questions on this particular item.

The Deputy Chairman: Item 191 is the general administration item.

Mr. Fisher: I just thought it would be like the other estimates and we could take it up on the first item.

The Deputy Chairman: We are really on the Senate now.

Item agreed to.

[Mr. Argue.]

183. Allowance in lieu of residence, \$3,000.

Mr. Fisher: I just wanted to ask the Speaker what his views were in connection with the possible expenses for air travel, if that should be introduced. We have members' travelling expenses under this particular item at the present time. I wondered whether, if there be developed a discussion in relation to extending this privilege, the Speaker would have any views as to whether those expenses should come in this particular area or whether they should come under the Department of Transport. Further, I should like to ask whether he has had any consultation in connection with this particular question as yet.

Mr. Pickersgill: One o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps I can answer the question after one o'clock.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

The Deputy Chairman: We were on vote 183. Shall vote 183 carry? I would point out to hon. members that the general administration item is 185. Shall vote 183 carry?

Mr. McGee: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Broome: With regard to item 183, just before one o'clock the hon. member for Port Arthur spoke about providing air transportation for members whose ridings are a long way from Ottawa and I should like to support what he said.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I wonder whether the hon. member would wait until we get to vote 185, the administration item.

Item agreed to.

185. General administration—estimates of the Clerk, \$1,873,265.

Mr. Broome: I should like to support what the hon. member for Port Arthur said with regard to air transportation. If we were to remain silent our silence might be interpreted as meaning we do not support his viewpoint. Hon. members from British Columbia in particular do support his viewpoint. When I was at the parliamentary conference recently in Rio de Janeiro I was interested to learn that members of the United Kingdom parliament are provided with air transportation between their constituencies and London as they require it. I do not think anybody is asking for a wide open pass system but I believe that consideration should be given to the issuing of a limited number of passes,