

changes, or with discussions amongst the party leaders or house leaders, so that steps can be taken to make sure that the gentleman we have had as Speaker, who has done such a tremendously impartial job, will not be faced with the dilemma either of dropping out of the life of the House of Commons or of going back into a partisan contest when the next election is called.

He has graced this chamber in a manner that does pride to this institution of Parliament. I think that members in all parts of the House want him to continue. This bill does not say that. We could say it if we were establishing a residence for him and his successors here in Ottawa, and we could say it by taking the necessary legislative or constitutional steps so that a continuing Speaker of this institution would become one of our traditions. In my view the time to start that tradition is now while we have the present Speaker, who is such an outstanding occupant of the Chair of this House.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Translation]

**Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf):** Mr. Speaker, we now have before us Bill C-241, an Act to amend the Prime Minister's Residence Act. To make a long argument short, what the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is trying to put across in this four-page bill is merely that he does not want to keep paying rent.

• (3:50 p.m.)

Although the number of people who can settle their rent problem in such a way across Canada is quite limited, hon. members will agree that it does not take a genius to come up with such an idea. I even thought about it myself, since apart from the rent I pay for a room here in Ottawa, I have still some outstanding payments on my own home. As most Canadians are in a similar situation, sometimes I think how nice it would be to stop paying rent and frankly, there are months when I would be better off if I did. But in order not to sleep in the open air in Ottawa, I pay the rent for my room, and to avoid having my house taken away from me, in my riding, I make my payments.

I do not say that that provision of Bill C-241 could not be applied, for instance, in the case of a prime minister without any means. But it is known that such is not the case of the present Prime Minister, for besides having a personal fortune, his name appears on the payroll of the Canadian Treasury. I will no doubt be allowed to quote page 34 of the Beaupré report on the matter:

From 1867 to 1873, the salary of the Prime Minister was equivalent to that of other Ministers of the Crown, namely \$5,000 per year. In 1873, legislation provided for a salary of \$8,000 per annum for the office. This amount was increased in 1905 to \$12,000 and in 1920 to \$15,000 per annum. The current salary of \$25,000 per annum was authorized in 1954. An amount of \$2,000 as a tax-free motor car allowance was first authorized in 1931 under an appropriation act and this same amount was incorporated into the 1963 amendment to the Senate and House of Commons Act. Since 1950, the law has provided for the opera-

### *Prime Minister's Residence Act*

tion and maintenance of a residence in Ottawa for the Prime Minister for which he pays an annual rental of \$5,000. The Prime Minister is also provided with a summer residence and motor car. In summary, the current salary and allowances of the Prime Minister are as follows:

Sessional Indemnity as a Member of Parliament . . . .	\$12,000
Sessional Allowance as a Member of Parliament . . . .	6,000
Salary as Prime Minister . . . . .	25,000
Motor Car Allowance . . . . .	2,000

All that amounted to \$45,000 under the old law. And should Bill C-241 be passed, then the Prime Minister would receive \$53,000 a year. This means a little more than \$1,000 a week. I think that it is not so bad.

As it may be noted if we read clause 5 of the bill, to all these advantages, others are added, and I quote:

4. (1) The Governor in Council may appoint a steward or housekeeper and such other employees as he deems necessary for the management of the Prime Minister's residence, and may fix their rate of remuneration and conditions of employment.

Mr. Speaker, paying the rent of a man who earns \$53,000 to be at the head of a government that asks people to tighten their belts, this is somewhat ridiculous. While he has a motor car at his disposal, for which gasoline is provided, and the use of a summer residence, we should have to pay for his rent on top of that!

To pay the rent of a Prime Minister who can also use government aircraft to travel across the world, appears rather surprising. To pay the rent of a Prime Minister who has an allowance of \$53,000 in addition to his capital gains, when all Canadians who want to own their homes continue to pay the 11 per cent tax on building materials, when 70 per cent of Canadian families must do with an annual income of less than \$4,000, that, in my view, could be called disgusting.

To ask the less affluent to pay the rent of the most affluent, when inflation is rampant, to ask them to pay the rent of the Prime Minister when factories are closing down and people are thrown out of work in Canada, to pay the rent of the Prime Minister in order to solve his housing problem when close to one million Canadians are looking for jobs, to pay the rent of the Prime Minister when pensioners aged 65 and over, who have lead an honest life, must be satisfied with an increase of 42 cents per month, is that really, Mr. Speaker, the just society that we have been promised?

I have here a summary of the Prime Minister's life as reported in part in the *Canadian Intelligence Service* of September-October 1969. It is in bulletin No. 36. It says about the Prime Minister, and I quote:

1940—He is expelled from the Canadian Training Officers' Corps for insubordination;

I have also an account of the life of another member of the Armed Forces, a guy discharged for health reasons after 23 years of service. In October 1970, he bought a small 26 x 40 bungalow for \$16,000. Having made a down payment of \$1,900, he will have to pay a monthly rent of \$118 until the year 2000, for a total of \$44,000.