

offensive to this House, because there are Liberals. That is a fact of life, lamentable as it may be.

As a House officer I submit that the Deputy Speaker in accepting to preside over a leadership convention, a joyful event which will require some poise and some equilibrium, is simply being recognized for the virtues which she has displayed time and time again and the impartiality which she has displayed in presiding over this Chamber.

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I want to make one brief point on the matter that we are discussing.

I heard the hon. member for Mississauga South say that the Deputy Speaker was entitled to vote in this House and therefore it would not be inappropriate for her to preside as co-chair of the Conservative convention. If I am not mistaken there are circumstances, although they are limited, under which the Speaker of this House can vote. Does that mean that it would be appropriate for the Speaker of the House to preside over a party convention?

The point is that we are dealing with appearances. We are not talking about the personal integrity or qualities of the Deputy Speaker. We are dealing with appearances and how these appearances apply when we are talking about somebody who holds the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. Therefore, I am very happy to support my House leader in arguing that it would not be appropriate for someone holding the position of Deputy Speaker to preside over a party convention. Mr. Speaker, I hope you will take my comments into account in your ruling on this important matter.

Mr. Speaker: I have listened with great care to what has been said. I am going to reserve on this matter. It may well be that the House ought to hear from the Deputy Speaker. If that is appropriate then arrangements can be made to that effect.

I do want to emphasize, because this is a matter of great interest to all members, that it has been clearly expressed in the House that the point being raised by the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond is not a personal attack on the Deputy Speaker. As far as I can see there is no suggestion that there is any criticism of

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any kind at all of the manner in which she is fulfilling her duties in this House. I accept that.

I am going to have to consider the matter and I will return to the House as soon as I can.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Pursuant to Standing Order 30(6), the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1135)

[English]

PUBLIC SECTOR BONUSES ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface) moved that Bill C-339, an act to eliminate the payments of bonuses in the public sector of Canada, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee in the Human Resources envelope.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this particular private member's bill is really quite simple in intent. It wants the government to look at the current approach to the payment of bonuses to a very small group of individuals and to see whether or not it is in fact fair.

I contend it is not and I shall advance arguments to that effect. I contend that we need to look at it with the intent of eliminating it unless we can come forward with an approach that is fair to every single man and woman who works for the Public Service.

I recognize subsequent to hearing concerns expressed by Canadians, people such as myself, that the government has decided to freeze the payment of bonuses to public servants for now and into the future. I hope that is in fact going to happen. I point out if that is in fact so and they can live without that payment why can this policy not be continued in the future?

It was frozen not only because of the concerns that were voiced, but as well because there was the recognition that the Public Service has been limited to zero, zero and three per cent. It has also been frozen because of the economic situation in which we find ourselves today.

We are not without knowing that we are talking about 1.6 million unemployed Canadians. We are not without knowing there are roughly five million Canadians living