

*Senate and House of Commons Act*

large amounts, while others have minimal actual expenses. Some members of this House have constituencies so large that travel expenses alone could eat up that expense allowance. Some, such as those with families and younger children, face the difficulty of double residential expenses, while others do not. Some members, and I must admit I am one, have expended considerable sums to maintain at their own expense offices in their constituencies for the service of their constituents. Others do not do so. The result is that the equity of treatment theory, that is giving the same salary to all and the same allowance or expense to all, produces serious inequities among members.

● (4:50 p.m.)

I would be in favour, Mr. Speaker, of increasing accountable expenses which would enable Members of Parliament to do a better job in the service to or in communication with their constituents. However, that is not what this bill does. This bill substantially increases salaries and non-accountable expenses. It fails, however, to provide for the principle of accountability of expenses. I am quite sure there are members in this House whose obligations are such that they need the money involved in the proposed increases, but the plain fact of the matter is that this substantial increase is proposed at a time when every public interest and every public exhortation by the government stresses the necessity of restraint in respect of wages, prices and salaries. I ask this question: how on earth can we, as elected representatives of this country, expect restraint from others which we do not practice ourselves? In short, Mr. Speaker, I think the proposed increase is simply wrong. I know there are sincerely held opinions to the contrary, but I feel obliged to act according to my own judgment and my own conscience and vote against this bill.

Some months ago when this matter first came up for public discussion I made it quite clear to my constituents, and shall do so again, that I do not propose during the present Parliament to accept any personal benefit from the increased salary if it is approved by Parliament.

**Mr. S. J. Korçhinski (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I may be the last speaker in this debate. I do not know, either, whether an arrangement had been made to perhaps end the debate. I can only say that I have wrestled with this problem for a long time, and perhaps that is the reason I have not risen before now to participate in this debate. On matters affecting my constituents, I try to speak for them in this House. On matters affecting me as a person, I think I owe it to my constituents to allow them to speak for me. I realize there are many members who require a pay increase. I do not think any person really realizes what each Member of Parliament has to go through, any more than I know what type of business operation is behind the store I see as I walk down a street. One day I see a beautiful store. The next day I notice that it is closed down, although I had the impression that it was making a lot of money.

I know people look at the present salary of \$18,000 and are influenced by that figure. This is what they throw

[Mr. Brewin.]

back at us. In the past I have supported pay increases and have taken the brunt of the attack in this regard. However, I have not suffered too badly as a result of my stand. I believe I owe an explanation to the House, and perhaps to my constituents, concerning the course of action I intend to take. I realize that my position is different from that of anyone else. I have found it necessary to supplement my income from the income derived from my farm, whenever it has made money. I can honestly say that during the past three or four years it lost money. At the same time, people on farms in the same area suffered the same fate. I have a young family which I must consider. I must also consider the electorate and remind myself that some day they may ask me to stay home.

I realize that the situation may be different in respect of a bachelor because I was in that position myself as a member of this House over a period of four years. I know how easy it was for me to get around the constituency when I had no other obligations. Now, however, the situation is different. I have a constituency which is perhaps different from most constituencies. In addition, I know the difficulties involved in trying to get around my constituency and still maintain some semblance of family life. I realize there should be a better system of pay increases than we have at present. The bill does not set out a formula which would avoid the necessity of our having to go through this same procedure again. I believe the constituents in my area have perhaps a different attitude from that of constituents in many other areas. In many urban areas where there are many doctors, lawyers, successful businessmen and the like, it is conceivable that the people accept the principle involved in this legislation. I, however, must walk up and down the streets of nearly deserted towns.

My constituency has been expanded to the point that it is almost impossible to serve it properly. Many Indians and others who populate the northern part of my constituency have not been visited because it is most difficult to do so. The area is very great. As I have said, the constituency has become larger and larger after each redistribution. The population in this area has become smaller because there is no money to be made in that area. I noticed an announcement in the newspaper the other day that bricklayers are to receive something in the order of \$6.69 an hour. In areas where such salaries are not unusual, it is perhaps easy to obtain a measure of support for an increase of this kind. In my situation, this is not the case. Also, in a rural area campaign funds are pretty difficult to obtain. I have been involved in seven campaigns and I know who has had to foot the bill. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, quite freely that there would be some political advantage in my supporting this bill because I could easily use the extra money to my own advantage. But I believe there are other important considerations.

Because there are many people in my area who have low incomes, it is possible that rather than having volunteers come forward to see what might be done, people might come forward to see how much they could get from a member in view of the increase in pay. Try to