

Senate and House of Commons

home. I am not broke, but I am badly bent. Ordinarily we would not be paid until the end of the month. These may be considered trivial questions, but they are in the minds of some hon. members.

Mr. St. Laurent: The bill as drafted does not provide for an indemnity for one week of adjournment if the house is adjourned for more than one week. If it is adjourned for a week or less the allowances will run on but if the adjournment is for more than a week, a week's adjournment is not paid for. The second question was whether the members will receive their allowances immediately or have to wait. I am informed that the treasury officer is prepared to issue cheques immediately at the \$25 rate for the days we shall have been here.

I just wish to enter this one divergent view with respect to the other matters mentioned by the hon. member. I do not pretend to be running the country and I do not think any of my predecessors pretended nor will any of my successors pretend that they have run or will be running the country. They discharged, I am discharging and they will be discharging heavy responsibilities; but those are responsibilities which are shared not only with their colleagues but with all members of parliament. Together we try, not to run the country but to help our fellow citizens operate its economy in a manner that will be to the advantage of all.

With respect to the insufficiency of the indemnities that are paid, it may very well be that some day parliament will have to consider this whole question. But at this time I do not think the public would expect us to be thinking of ourselves but rather to be thinking of the general situation as it exists.

Mr. Hansell: I am not going to extend my remarks except to say that it is a nice spirit that the Prime Minister manifests when he says that he is not attempting to run the whole country. I realize that he and his colleagues do not do that, but I realize also that if anything goes wrong with the country they will be blamed. Perhaps that is worth some consideration in the way of compensation.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Chairman, because of the remarks made by the hon. member for Macleod it may be that some of us would be misunderstood if we did not say something. I did not say anything because the bill proposed by the Prime Minister is in my opinion quite reasonable. Because it is quite reasonable and because I felt that I understood the meaning of the words therein there was no reason to make any remarks or to ask any questions. Although I have not

[Mr. Hansell.]

consulted with other members of our group I think that I can speak for our group as a whole. As I listened to the remarks made by the hon. member for Macleod, I was greatly tempted to follow him, but I shall content myself with saying that I do not believe members of parliament will come into disrepute because of the size of their indemnities. Members of parliament will come into disrepute, if they do so at all, because of their conduct. There is nothing that makes me feel worse than to hear in many quarters today people like the Prime Minister and other members of the house who have been here for a long time, and who have given their lives to political affairs, referred to sneeringly as politicians. There is something wrong either with the actions of members of parliament or with the thinking of the community when members of parliament are referred to sneeringly as politicians. If we are ever going to get away from that we shall do so only through our own conduct and not because we decide to pay ourselves a higher indemnity. The hon. member for Macleod also said that the government would take the responsibility or take the blame. I do not think that is right. We may attempt to charge them with the blame, but they are not going to take the responsibility.

(Translation):

Mr. Bonnier: Mr. Chairman, I wish to point out that we have no French copies of the bill under consideration. Twice I have asked the messenger to bring me a copy but it is impossible to get one. I would like to know the reason for this. It is always the same story; we always have a hard time getting the French version of the bills. I wish the French and English copies of the bills were distributed at the same time.

Mr. St. Laurent: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member did not get a French copy of this bill it is due to an error in distribution. The copies were ready and the messengers handed them out to those who, to the best of their knowledge, wanted French copies.

(Text):

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I should like to say a word. I must say that I am content and pleased with the explanation of the Prime Minister. To digress for a second, I agree with the hon. member for Macleod that we pay our Prime Minister what, in my judgment, is a disgracefully inadequate sum of money for the responsibilities of his office. However, I will leave that. So far as the rest of us are concerned, nobody had to twist our arms to get us to come down here. We all struggled pretty hard to make the