

Hon. Mr. GREGG: Twice a year, these people are called together, and I can say on their behalf that the committee whose names I quoted when the bill was presented are folks who do not serve on this committee because of the per diem allowance nor to get trips to Ottawa, as you well know. I believe it is the intention here to be merely able to work this out based upon the situation at any given time. An amount may be set today which in another year would be out-dated. At a later time it should perhaps be less or more, and I think there is some advantage in having it flexible.

Mrs. FAIRCLOUGH: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am not concerned with the expenses—It is a matter of principle. Mr. Croll's submission was that this would permit all of these people to be paid on an equitable basis and that the amount would be the same. We have an admission that the amount is probably not the same—or at least we suspect it is not the same in all cases. If this is so, what is the objection to putting the specific amount in the bill. I really cannot see it myself. I feel there should be some place where this amount becomes public knowledge.

Mr. CROLL: It does become public knowledge—you will find it in the public accounts. You and I probably would not have the same amount—I would probably draw more than you for the trip down here for the opening of parliament.

Mrs. FAIRCLOUGH: Travelling expenses are of course subject to variation, but your per diem allowance is not.

Mr. BYRNE: Are you referring to the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women?

Mr. CROLL: I remember that the people who were attending the United Nations conference came back complaining bitterly that they had not been treated fairly, many were out of pocket, and some members refused to go because they could not afford it. Now, the people who went overseas as part of the United Nations group came back and complained. There was nothing you could do for them at all because there had been a specified amount. A couple years ago they made a change in the allowances and the Treasury Board laid down what they thought was a proper allowance. At that time there was a more uniform allowance amongst the various people and I think that is the purpose of the new Act.

Mr. BELL: I can see Mrs. Fairclough's point, though. We objected very strongly to the omission of the amount that was to be paid the chairman of the pension commission and one of Mr. Lapointe's bills.

Mr. CROLL: No, you objected to it being fixed by Governor in Council. This is a different matter.

Mr. BELL: It is the same principle, though.

Mr. CROLL: It is never done, Mr. Bell. The only other person who would do it is the minister. It is not the same principle involved. It is a different matter entirely on which you could have a difference of opinion.

Mr. BELL: They all have been fixed by the Governor in Council.

Mr. CROLL: Yes, but this is a per diem amount.

Mr. BELL: But this is a small example of the same principle.

Mr. CROLL: It is a different thing entirely.

Mrs. FAIRCLOUGH: It is a different basis of remuneration true enough and probably in this sense you could not really call it remuneration—it is more in the nature of an expense allowance, but nevertheless, as Mr. Bell has said, the principle is there and the authority for payment is taken out of the hands of parliament and placed in the hands of someone who may make an arbitrary decision.