

Mr. Speaker, there was another comment published by a Vancouver paper, *The Province*, on May 6, 1971, and it is as follows:

● (3:20 p.m.)

[English]

Some people think that you can get better members by giving them much larger salaries. I don't agree because you have to be a "yes" man in order to get anywhere in the party.

You can elect the best Liberal in Canada, wealthy, influential, clever, but he will never get anywhere if he bucks the Prime Minister too often. A good example of "yes" men are Minister Sharp and Ex-Secretary of War Cadieux. A year ago both of these cabinet ministers came out strongly against any reduction in the NATO forces.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we regret that the minister responsible has not introduced an amendment to this bill in order to comply with the recommendations of the Beaupré committee. Before the bill is passed on third reading, I do wish to receive the assurance that those hon. members who are going to hire a secretary in their ridings will be able to supply him or her with a T-4 slip and deduct his or her salary on their tax returns.

[English]

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to speak on Bill C-242, an act to amend the Senate and House of Commons Act, the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act, and an act to make provision for the retirement of members of the Senate. At the outset, I would like to say that I fully endorse the remarks made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). I think he has pretty well put the case for those of us who intend to vote against this legislation.

However, I would like to point out that when the bill was before us for second reading, just about a month ago, I opposed it at that time and urged that some changes be made to it in committee. We find that the bill has come back to the House without alteration. Yesterday, there was an amendment moved by a member of our party which suggested that the increases should be delayed until the next election. I voted for that amendment and I still feel that something of the sort should be included in this legislation.

There are one or two other points I should like to make, Mr. Speaker. While the bill will give adequate increases to members of the House of Commons and the Senate, it does not solve the problem of dealing with our remuneration in the future. This is one of the major weaknesses of the legislation. I had hoped that some kind of formula would be established to take care of future increases, and surely this is what we should be aiming for instead of passing amendments which will give lump sum increases. I feel that there has not been a sincere attempt to evaluate the job done by Members of Parliament. Really, it is not too different from any other job in industry, so it could and should be evaluated and have a remuneration attached to it.

When I spoke on second reading of this bill, I suggested that there should be some niche in the civil service to

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which the work done by Members of Parliament would be comparable. The remuneration could then be set at a commensurate figure with an annual increment or an increment every two years, as is the case in the civil service. The matter should be taken out of our hands. We should not be placed in the position of coming here every five or six years to vote for an increase in our salaries. I believe that the failure of this legislation to evaluate the job is an indication that it is not good legislation.

● (3:30 p.m.)

There are several other points I should like to make, Mr. Speaker, to show why I am opposed to this bill. For the past 2½ years members of this House, government ministers, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and those who advise the government on the economy, have been preaching restraint. There have been guidelines which industry, business and the labour unions have been urged to follow. Up until this year, the guideline indicated that we should not have more than a 6 per cent increase in salary in one year and this past year the guideline was set at between 4 per cent and 4½ per cent. The House of Commons has been giving this advice to the people of Canada. Now, we come here and take a 50 per cent increase on our salary, plus a 33½ per cent increase in our taxfree expense allowance. If we expect others to follow our advice and have some respect for what we say, we should at least follow the restraints we set for others.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harding: It seems to me that there are many reasons why Members of Parliament should not have this increase at this time. I have mentioned them before and I shall mention them again. Four or five months ago members of this House increased the old age security pension by exactly 42 cents a month, or \$5.04 a year. We told those on basic pension that this was all that the Canadian nation could afford. However, when it comes to ourselves we take an additional \$6,000 on our salary plus an additional 33½ per cent or \$2,000 on our taxfree expense allowance.

Another of my objections is that the increases have been made retroactive to October, 1970. We have no labour union and so we were not negotiating for a salary increase in October, although something might have been going on behind the scenes. We did not know anything about this bill until April 28, 1971, yet the bill provides for almost a year's back pay. I say this is wrong, Mr. Speaker. We did not give a retroactive increase to old age pensioners—indeed this House even denied them the 2 per cent increase based on the cost of living index. Members of this House had the gall to vote for the proposal that the 2 per cent increase, which normally followed the cost of living index, had to be taken away from those on basic pension. I say it is wrong for us to make our own salary increase retroactive to October, 1970 and I have no hesitation in telling members of this House and the general public that it is wrong.

There are other points which I think should be raised, Mr. Speaker. I feel that the tax free allowance is exces-