

The first is that the retroactive clause seems to be badly out of place. I do not believe that this legislation, when passed, should be made retroactive to last July 8 because we all knew at the time of that election exactly what the salaries would be, and if we did not like those salaries we did not have to become candidates in the last general election. If parliament insists on an increase, I think it should equally insist on applying the increase as of the date the legislation is passed, and not last July.

● (1610)

Another feature of this bill which I find disturbing is the fact that it applies increases to the salaries and expense allowances of members of the Senate. If it is difficult to accept the idea that this is the proper time for members of the House of Commons to increase their salaries, I suggest that it is impossible to consider this an appropriate time for members of the Senate to receive similar treatment.

With the greatest of respect for the dozen or so Senators who actually do a day's work, I must honestly say that the Senate seems to be nothing more than a worn out appendix still attached to the body of government, which has so long escaped necessary surgery. To avoid such surgery, and to go even further and say that we should pay higher salaries and increased expense allowances to the Senate seems to be not only utterly unjustified but completely ridiculous.

The Senate has become a pasture for the sacred cows of the Liberal Party. The present government has followed the practice of appointing to the Senate worn out members of the cabinet, Liberal Party bagmen whose successful collections on behalf of the party must be rewarded for their services, apparently at government expense, and defeated Liberal candidates who, despite the fact that they have been rejected by the voters, must somehow be retained on the public payroll as a reward for services rendered.

Should we really be considering raising salaries and expense allowances of a group composed predominantly of persons in the categories to which I have just referred? What work does the Senate do, for which it is entitled to any raise? Indeed, if one were to measure the work and the importance to this country of the Senate, it would seem that a heavy salary decrease should be applied or, better still, the institution simply should be allowed to fade into history.

Before departing from the subject of the Senate I would like to add that I do not in any way mean to insult or criticize in my remarks those few members of the Senate who do perform some service to that body and to Canada, but that number of Senators is limited. Indeed, since I came to this chamber in 1972, a period now approaching three years, I have found that it is a rare day you actually see a Senator in the flesh. Now and then one or two are visible here and there, but it almost seems to have come to a situation where those who come into the Centre Block on guided tours should specifically ask the guides to point out a living Senator, if they can find one. Indeed, if they do manage to glimpse a Senator passing by, I suggest that they should remember the occasion because they will have seen a species which, for all practical purposes, has

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become almost extinct.

I have heard the argument advanced that this House must include in the bill raises for the Senate; otherwise that chamber will not pass the bill when it clears the House of Commons. Surely this is a very poor excuse, and indeed if the Senate were to turn down such a bill by this House, it would force the logical and inevitable final decision which must some day come. Only the elected representatives of the people should be making the decisions which govern this country, and such decisions should not be subject to the approval of those who are responsible, in most cases, to nobody and, regrettably, in many cases only to their godfather, the Liberal Party of Canada.

I have listened with great respect to the words this afternoon of the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker). He has spoken out clearly and forthrightly against this legislation, and his voice in many ways has been the conscience of parliament because he has said publicly what so many sitting here think in silence. To speak out is not popular, but surely none of us come here to win popularity contests.

**An hon. Member:** You have, Tom.

**Mr. Cossitt:** I recall the words of our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on May 27, 1974, in Etobicoke, Ontario, when he said that he would wrestle inflation to the ground. The wrestling match has never begun, and now it appears that it never will. Perhaps the Prime Minister has revised his statement and now says that we should all raise our salaries first and look at the problem of inflation later.

While the Prime Minister collects fancy \$80,000 Cadillacs, thousands and thousands of dollars worth of antiques, and a lavish and luxurious swimming pool at the expense of Canadian taxpayers, the government asks parliament to follow his horrible example by thinking of ourselves first and placing the Canadian people and their serious economic problems last.

A few moments ago the right hon. member for Prince Albert mentioned some of the expenses our Prime Minister has accumulated at taxpayers' cost, and I would like, as a small footnote, to add an answer to an order paper question which I received just this afternoon in regard to Harrington Lake, which shows that the latest expenditures just for this current year by the Prime Minister at taxpayers' expense on his summer cottage total \$47,749. There is included a contract of \$17,000 for something, and I wonder what. This extravagance, in face of the need for restraint and the need to fight inflation, is typical of the government and something which we should all feel is reprehensible.

In conclusion, as I said a few moments ago, to speak out on this matter is obviously not a popular thing to do, but I believe it is the right thing to do. If the provisions in this legislation were reasonable and this legislation had been brought in for consideration after the problems of the people of Canada had been dealt with, it might be possible to support it, but in all conscience the provisions of this bill are too extravagant, and they resemble too much of the "let them eat cake" attitude of the Prime Minister and the present Government of Canada. They are provisions