

Supply—Legislation

Mr. Nielsen: Rubbish. I use an aircraft.

Mr. Hardie: Oh, no, you don't. There are only two polling divisions in your riding and you do not have to use aircraft.

Mr. Nielsen: Fifty-six.

Mr. Hardie: Two polling divisions. Ross River and Old Crow.

Mr. Pickersgill: Is Old Crow a polling division?

Mr. Hardie: In any event I wonder what goes on in the caucus of the Tory party.

Mr. Ricard: Lots of things.

Mr. Hardie: I wonder what is said when the hon. members for Churchill, Meadow Lake, Athabasca and Peace River stand up and say "We want a better deal". These fellows say, "Hear, hear" but I can just imagine what goes on in the caucus.

An hon. Member: Why not listen in? It is tapped.

Mr. Hardie: If I could have it tapped and piped into my room as the Prime Minister does I would find it most interesting to know what goes on in the Tory caucus. Possibly I could even tell you now. In any event, Mr. Chairman, I do think—

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): You do? That is surprising!

Mr. Hardie: If I were to go back through all the pages of *Hansard* that have been filled by the Postmaster General I would say he did a hell of a lot less thinking than I have ever done.

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Hardie: In fact, he did not do any.

An hon. Member: Correction stands.

Mr. Hardie: And he certainly has not done any thinking since he took office. I urge that the Speaker whose estimates we are discussing at the present time consider the possibility of extending to hon. members from northern constituencies an extra travelling allowance to cover the cost of transportation in their constituencies where transportation by air is the only means of transportation.

Mr. Granger: Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speaker and other hon. members who spoke concerning extra expenses incurred in properly looking after the interests of their constituents in northern constituencies. My constituency begins in central Newfoundland, at the south, and continues north to the northernmost tip of Labrador. If I am to get around my constituency at

all I must do so by air. There is a string of settlements extending up that long coastline all of which have a right to be visited by their parliamentary representative and certainly he has a duty to visit them and acquaint himself with their problems in order to properly speak on their behalf. If one attempted to do it by any means other than air one would probably have to spend the whole 12 months of the year travelling. The result is that one must use aircraft.

All hon. members can appreciate that travel by air is much more expensive than by other means. One has the double handicap of long distances and high costs as compared with normal travel in smaller constituencies. I urge that Mr. Speaker take into consideration the question of making allowances for the travelling expenses of hon. members from constituencies where the only means of transportation is by air.

Mr. Speaker: I will just say this about travelling expenses. They are entirely statutory and it is up to the House of Commons to do whatever it wants to do.

Mr. Hardie: Will you recommend it, though, sir?

Mr. Regier: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether I might ask the first commoner why there is a reduction of \$10,000 in the contribution to the retirement allowance of members of parliament. The estimate for this fiscal year is only \$55,000. I understand that members' contributions are matched by the government. I have made a rough calculation. There are 265 members, and 265 times \$240 comes to \$63,600, which is \$8,600 above \$55,000.

Mr. Speaker: I have here the annual report of the fund. The variation may be accounted for in the fact that members have the right to pay up arrears, and the act provides for matching those payments as well as the current payments. I will get the information for the hon. member.

Mr. Fisher: Has the Speaker noticed certain comments in newspapers by members of the press gallery about the conditions in the press gallery, and has he taken the whole question of the cramped quarters and the rumours of cockroaches, rats, and so forth in that particular area into consideration and does he intend to report on the conditions which have been referred to as slum conditions in that particular area of the house?

Mr. Speaker: I have only this to report. I have had no complaints from the press gallery this session or the previous session. I know that periodic fumigation takes place and I am sure that the best is done with the