

*Members' Salaries*

[Translation]

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, may I say just a few words about what the leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent) has just told us. Talk about double-talk!

For the increase, against the increase: one does not know where to stand. What a series of contradictions considering the way they act with regard to other groups in our society.

Yes, the NDP are the self-appointed champions of the working class, time and time again asking that working class income be indexed. That we agree with too. But when it comes to making comparisons between the role of Parliament, that of hon. members and that of other Canadians, I feel the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby resorts strictly to demagogy.

When it is a matter of increasing the salaries of union leaders, the NDP leader tells the House: Those poor people, we must help them.

And it is so true that they are there to come to the defence of everybody and in saying that only they can play politics—

**An hon. Member:** That is it.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** That is the point. They think they can draw public attention that way. It is so true, Mr. Speaker, that yesterday my colleague from Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne) made a good speech on Bill C-44. I spoke also, as did others. And this morning, let us check in the newspapers, in *Le Jour*, *Le Devoir*, *Le Journal de Montréal* or others, all report that the member for Oshawa-Whitby promised to oppose Bill C-44.

That is the news we read this morning, that is the freedom of the press: to forget to say the truth when some members spoke in favour of Bill C-44 and to give attention to those who want to practice demagogy in Canada.

**An hon. Member:** That is true.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I say that there is no comparison between a representative of the people, which the member for Oshawa-Whitby is, and other people. There is no comparison because nobody, union leader, corporation manager or what have you, must face the responsibilities of a federal—or provincial for that matter—member of Parliament.

The New Democrats of the socialist provinces of Canada, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, have understood this in their assemblies, because they are in power. Here, they hanker for power and therefore they do not understand anything.

**An hon. Member:** They will never understand.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** So much so, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member says he agrees with the parliamentary allowance, but is against higher non taxable expenses. By how much should the allowance proper be increased, he is not quite sure, but he agrees with that. Expenses, no, we are like all the rest of the members in that respect.

[Mr. Broadbent.]

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned yesterday that a member who comes from a distant riding for instance—some come from this area and have no additional expenses—but those who come from another province, those who like ourselves come from northwest or northeast Quebec and have to maintain—

**An hon. Member:** Northern Ontario!

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):**—Northern Ontario, those who have to maintain one residence in Ottawa and another in their hometown, who have to take care of their wife and their children at home, have no family life. You will tell me that they could have refrained from being candidates, but nevertheless we felt the urge to offer people our services and I do not think the population objects to their members of parliament living decently and working freely on behalf of the people.

Mr. Speaker, renting in an apartment building here in Ottawa cost \$300 or \$350 a month. And you have to provide for the food expenses of your family in your riding, everybody knows that. NDP members know that too. When a wedding takes place, we are invited. When it is a wedding anniversary, we are invited again. If there is a funeral somewhere, we have to send flowers. That does not mean we have to, of course not, but if we do not want to be called tightwads, we have no choice, we feel committed toward our constituents. Mr. Speaker, there is no comparing our expenses and those of other Canadians. We are not in the same situation. Whenever there is some kind of demonstration, some collection in aid of a charity, whenever a sporting club, hockey, baseball or any other kind of club starts a fund, the first one asked to contribute is the federal or provincial member of Parliament. What do we do? A small cheque for \$25, \$50, \$100, and so forth. Someone might say we are not forced to, and of course we are not. But if we did not do it, we would be labelled misers. So we do our large share in the community life of our constituencies.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Someone just yawned. If he does not care about people, if it does not affect him—

**Some hon. Members:** He is looking after publicity!

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Well, maybe, but to play politics again, as I said before.

Since the New Democrats have been in favour of the escalation clause for a number of years, and since they have been attacking inflation also for a number of years, how can they reconcile their anti-inflation stand with their opposition to indexation to the cost of living? If we were to believe them, the federal government accounts alone for increases in the cost of living, governments and members of Parliament. I believe union leaders should also be concerned with inflation. They are responsible, as everyone else is for inflation and poverty among riches. We know there are poor people. But every time we introduce bills, as we have been doing for these last 35 years, to improve the taxpayers' and consumers' purchasing power, without increasing prices, the New Democrat members are the first to vote against us. In so doing, they