

Senate and House of Commons Act

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, we are entitled to our views in this house, especially on a bill which concerns directly each and every member. The member who has just accused us of hypocrisy should be honest enough to rise and identify himself.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Lotbinière.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

An hon. member opposite saw fit not to rise, knowing that by remaining seated he would not be identified and that what he said would appear in *Hansard* under: "An hon. Member". Indeed, we shall never know who said *Créditistes* are hypocrites.

Therefore, I refuse to pursue the matter if that member is not courageous enough to stand up and withdraw.

Mr. Speaker, I humbly point out to you that we always have respect for the institution of Parliament and our colleagues. We respect the opinion of government members and we ask them to respect us.

Not only is the language of the member opposite unparliamentary, but it reveals a lack of good manners and honesty.

Knowing your integrity and fairness for minority parties, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to enforce our Standing Orders in order that our rules and our right of speech be respected.

Mr. Speaker: Order please. The hon. member has the floor and may obviously continue his remarks. The hon. member objects to the fact that some comment was expressed in some mysterious quarters of the House. He invites the hon. member who made this remark out of turn perhaps to reveal his identity. The hon. member who made the remark which was unnoticed by the Chair except when the hon. member for Lotbinière referred to it does not want to reveal his identity and it seems that the hon. member for Lotbinière who has the floor and who was speaking very ably for the benefit of the House should continue his remarks which the Chair and all hon. members will listen to attentively.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, while minding your—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I must once again interrupt the hon. member for Lotbinière as the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) in turn raises the question of privilege.

[*English*]

Mr. Alexander: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I shall not take too long but I think it should be recorded in *Hansard* that the mysterious remark which came from the floor of the House, to which Your Honour referred, did not come from the left of Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I suggest to hon. members that we get on with the debate. The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) was making a very positive, constructive and interesting speech and I am sure hon. members on both sides of the House are anxious to hear him.

[Mr. Speaker.]

[*Translation*]

Mr. Fortin: I shall go on, Mr. Speaker, on your kind invitation, but I find it strange that this mysterious voice cannot be identified, whereas tomorrow the words spoken will be printed in *Hansard* without the speaker being identified.

I should now like to pursue my comments honestly, briefly and precisely.

First of all, we feel that the statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) does not take into account the proposals and findings of the report of the Advisory Committee on Parliamentary Salaries and Expenses tabled in November 1970.

Quite extensive studies are made but we do abide by their conclusions.

Secondly, it is abnormal that hon. members according to the will and the decisions of the current government, should vote themselves an increased allowance. This is a ridiculous system to which exception is being taken throughout Canada. A permanent and independent commission should make such a decision jointly with the Treasury Board approximately every two years.

Third, it is inconceivable that the revision of hon. members' salaries should come every five or ten years. For instance, the last increase dates back to 1963. Moreover, this biennial increase should be governed by the very standards imposed by the government on the Canadian people under the current economic situation. We submit that our decisions must be consistent with what we require from ordinary people.

Fourth, we cannot accept that the government should propose to raise hon. members' allowances and indemnities without improving and streamlining the instruments at their disposal so that they could give better service to the people in their constituency and in Parliament, a measure which would upgrade the role of Members of Parliament and parliamentary institutions.

Fifth, it is anomalous that the government should propose an \$8,000 unaccountable expense allowance without any obligation for us to produce vouchers. Members have no right to treat themselves any better than other Canadians.

It is a proven fact that a Member of Parliament has to spend such an amount within a year and even more if he wants to fulfil his tasks; there is no doubt about it. So why should we not be required to present vouchers if we really incur these expenses, taking into account, of course, the distance between our constituency and Ottawa.

The Prime Minister and the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) have both stated that each member could choose not to spend or to spend only part of the allowance. In so doing the government is setting up a wrong principle.

There are minimum services which a member of Parliament must provide to the people. Among them, we include the salary of a secretary working for the member in his riding.