

Supply—Legislation

I hope it may be possible to keep the sessional staff employed for a few days after the conclusion of the session. After all, there is a lot of work to be cleaned up.

I wish to make one other comment about the third matter I raised, namely, a yearly basis for the stenographers. There is one point of clarification I should make in case I did not make it clear before. I was not suggesting that we should keep a large staff of stenographers around the building for whom there would be nothing to do during the months when the members are not here. I suggested that they be put on the same basis as the *Hansard* reporters. We pay them annual salaries. We require them to be here when we need them, and I think they earn their annual salaries during that time, without doubt. During the months when members are not here they are free to go on holidays, brush up their shorthand, do court reporting or whatever they wish. My suggestion was that the stenographers might be put on the same basis. I shall not ask for a further answer tonight, but I thought I should clarify that point, particularly in view of the fact that the Speaker has indicated these matters are under consideration.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): Mr. Chairman, I hope the remarks I am about to make will be under the right item. If they are not, I crave your indulgence, because even a fat man must eat occasionally.

The matter I intend to speak about concerns something as to which, if the rules of the house permitted it, I would move a motion and if necessary divide the house thereon. Unfortunately the rules do not permit me to move a motion involving money matters. I hope that I may spare the blushes of the Speaker in what I am about to say, because I intend to say something later with which he may not entirely agree. If I were able to, the motion I would make is that we should supply our Speaker with at least \$5,000 per year as an entertainment allowance. As one of those who has enjoyed his hospitality, I would be in favour of such a move.

That is not the basic reason for what I have in mind. After all, we as members of the House of Commons can only act or speak through Mr. Speaker. During the last session and the present one, in fact ever since he has been Speaker, on occasions when persons of prominence from other nations have visited us, he has discharged his responsibility better than any other individual I know, and I mean all of us. He has permitted some of us, not chosen by lot but no doubt on some basis of that kind, to go into his chambers and meet these delightful people. I am sorry I was away the other day when he had a social

affair in the railway committee room. I, who know something about the cost of entertainment even in my little two by four room, know that that function cost him plenty of his own money.

We are the only country I know of—and I mean civilized countries—that does not make such an allowance. Taking the United Kingdom, United States and Canada, we are the only country of those three where the Speaker of the lower chamber—and I use that word with great respect to what we sometimes call the upper chamber—is not provided with an entertainment allowance. We give him an allowance of \$3,000 in lieu of a residence. I am sure that he spent two-thirds of that amount in one entertainment which he provided for us in the railway committee room of the House of Commons. What I am anxious to do is to assure the government that in another year they will receive all the support I can possibly give them if they will do something about my suggestion.

What are we? Where are our instincts of what is right, what is dignified and what is decent hospitality? Someone may say: Go ahead and put up your own money; that is all right. We know that things like that are utterly impossible, because in a group like ours the collector is always out money at the end of the road. I have collected dozens of times, and I know. I think, Mr. Chairman—and I say this with the utmost sincerity—that if we have any respect for ourselves we will permit the gentleman who is our leader in this house and who speaks for us to do the decent thing so that he may maintain his own dignity and we as members may maintain ours. I suggest that in another year something along that line should be done. I am quite prepared to name amounts, but that makes it commercial and I do not want to do so. I do not think we appreciate the things which the Speaker has done for us during the present session.

I turn now to something else, and in saying this I want to make it plain that I am not referring to any individual who spoke today or yesterday or anything of that kind. We have a rule that speeches may not be read in the House of Commons. In saying that I am not talking about any individual who reads a speech, Mr. Chairman. If this practice which is growing so fast continues, then this place will lose its value as a place in which contributions are made by individual members for the good of the country. I am going to go this far; if this practice continues we would be infinitely better off to adopt the rule of the congress of the United States whereby a man just files his speech on the congressional records. He puts in his