

Privilege—Mr. E. W. George

It is said that figures do not lie, but they often can be used for a specific purpose. Certain figures were given by the hon. member for Calgary West as reported at page 1055 of *Hansard*. He suggests that during the year 1951 I was paid for 204 days of service in the army, while at the same time this house was in session for 224 days. He then makes the allegation that I was paid for services performed for more days than there were in the year 1951. In passing, I might mention that, in fact, my pay was for 202½ days' service with the reserve forces. The important point, however, is one which will be appreciated by every hon. member, namely, that the actual sitting days of this house are much fewer than the length of the parliamentary session would indicate. For example, in 1951, parliament was in session 363 calendar days, not 224 as the hon. member stated. In the first session there were actually 105 sitting days, and in the second session there were 56 sitting days, making a total of 161 sitting days.

In addition, as all hon. members are aware, during each session a member of this house is permitted 15 days of absence. In 1951, therefore, I was entitled—as was every other hon. member—to absent myself from this house for 30 days; so that in actual fact, had I claimed the full privilege of being absent for 30 days, I would have been required to sit in this chamber for only 131 days. The mere recitation of these figures will indicate the inconsistency of maintaining that I drew pay for more days than there were in the year.

My constituents and the regiment know that, as is the case with a good many other members, my family and personal business affairs suffered because of the time I have spent on my parliamentary and regimental duties. However, I can assure hon. members that I have never neglected the duties and responsibilities which are mine as a member of parliament.

As hon. members know, I am not a lawyer, but I have read the statutes and discussed this matter with my friends, and I am convinced that a person can be a member of the reserve army and receive pay for the work he does without disqualifying himself as a member of the House of Commons. I also recognize that service in the reserve forces does not change the rule regarding attendance in the house except for camps and courses, and during 1951 I complied with the house rules regarding attendance. Having done so, I felt that there was nothing to prevent my

service in the reserve army, whether that service occurred in Sussex, Sackville, Tracadie or Ottawa.

That 1951 was an exceptional year for the regiment is obvious from what I have said. The death of the commanding officer, and the reorganization to which I referred, combined to create difficulties additional to the ordinary responsibilities of the commanding officer of the unit. Results of that work I have briefly mentioned. That the year was exceptional is indicated by the fact that the number of days required to conduct the affairs of the regiment was reduced from 202½ in 1951 to 133½ in 1952, and I am proud to say that the regiment won all the five trophies available to it.

I have been concerned in this address simply to lay all the facts before the hon. members. In making this explanation, I have endeavoured to keep my personal feeling out of it, but I resent deeply the imputation that I am in the reserve army for what I can get out of it financially. All these charges, implied or directly stated, I deny with indignation and with clear conscience.

I have devoted every hour I could spare to my unit, both in New Brunswick and here. The unit, I feel, reflects this. This required many, many hours of work. For that work I have been paid. For nothing else but that work have I been paid.

I have acted in the sincere belief that there is no ethical, moral or legal taint to what I have done in performing my duty as a member of this house and as a member of the reserve forces.

IRRIGATION

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER—REPORT OF
ROYAL COMMISSION

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): I should like to lay on the table two copies of the report of the royal commission on the South Saskatchewan project, and to inform the house that copies are available for immediate distribution to all members of parliament.

CURRIE REPORT

TABLING OF FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence): Last Tuesday, I referred to correspondence regarding the Currie report, and the correspondence I referred to was entered as an appendix to *Hansard*. In order to bring the house up to date I should like to table copies of a telegram from Mr. Currie to myself dated January 10, 1953; a letter from the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) to myself dated January 17, 1953, reporting on the