

out the research work which is really necessary if one is to be an effective representative here. I have not been here very long, but I find we are overburdened with a large amount of correspondence. We do a great deal of committee work and other work which often prevents our carrying out research, the task of digging down to find out exactly how legislation will affect the people. Improved research facilities are necessary. This is one of the first steps which should be taken if it is intended to give assistance to Members of Parliament. Perhaps assistance could be provided in each of the offices by way of an executive assistant who could take a great deal of the load from hon. members as far as correspondence is concerned, besides assisting in the research projects which in my opinion are so essential. This is one of the first priorities if members are adequately to fulfil the task we are sent here to perform, that is, the checking of legislation and the making of the best possible laws for the people of this nation.

I realize that things change as we go along, and no doubt we shall hear a variety of opinions expressed on the legislation which is before us. But I shall have no hesitation in voting against the legislation. The somewhat excessive amounts prescribed in it are certainly not warranted at this time. Whether the bill passes in its present form or whether amendments are made to it, I urge the government to set up machinery for properly evaluating the type of work we are doing here. Once and for all this question should be taken out of the House of Commons so that members of the various parties would not be called upon to vote for their own salaries.

It will not be so tough a job if we put our minds to it and are prepared to make a move. I hope this line of reasoning will be followed up before many months are passed. Again, I wish to assure all hon. members that I appreciate the views they have expressed. I intend to vote against the legislation, if I am here and the bill comes to a vote on second reading. I trust that some amendments will be made to it during the committee stage.

Mr. Kaplan: Would the hon. member permit a question? He criticized the Beaupré report as being only a partial study. I should like to ask him in what sense he considered it to be partial. Second, with the insight he has displayed as to the job of a Member of Parliament, what does he believe salaries of hon. members should be? The hon. member refrained from expressing a view on that point.

Mr. Harding: The point I was making is this: the Beaupré report never did compare the work we are doing here with other jobs in the civil service or in the business world. This is what I am suggesting should be done.

Mr. Kaplan: The second question?

An hon. Member: What do you think it is worth?

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Senate and House of Commons Act

• (9:30 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ralph Stewart (Cochrane): Mr. Speaker, the question of remuneration of members of Parliament has always been a very sensitive one, but I want to say immediately that some members are not sincere when speaking against an increase of that remuneration. I can even say that some of them, and I refer particularly to the Creditistes want that increase badly while wishing to make Canadians believe they do not want to get it. You can't have it both ways, and here I use the very apt French word "politicaille", which means petty political manoeuvres. That is what the Cr ditistes are doing. I am quite under the impression that their voters do not always believe them.

The hon. member for Lotbini re (Mr. Fortin) spoke a while ago. I have lived two years in the constituency of Lotbini re, at Saint-Patrice-de-Beau-Rivage, and I can tell you that the people of Saint-Patrice-de-Beau-Rivage and of the constituency of Lotbini re are not foolish enough to believe what the hon. member said a little while ago.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stewart: You see, the hon. member for Lotbini re—

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I would like to say to the hon. member who now has the floor that Saint-Beatrice is not located in Lotbini re, but in L vis, a riding which is represented by an hon. member of the Liberal party.

Mr. Stewart (Cochrane): At any rate, Mr. Speaker, when I was in Lotbini re, people were not foolish. I know that things may have changed since, but the people's thinking has not.

I was greatly interested in a thing that the hon. member for Lotbini re said a few moments ago. He asked a question and said that an answer just had to be given. He asked: what is the role of an hon. member? Well, if the Cr ditistes do not know what their role as members is, they have no business in this House! As for me, I know what being a member and serving my constituents in Cochrane means. My electors know and so do I. If I was not entitled to a salary increase, I would leave politics, for I am convinced that the members who serve their constituents well are entitled to a better salary.

[*English*]

Just a word about what was said earlier today by the leader of the New Democratic Party. I respect his opinions and the point of view of his colleagues but I do wish they would not take a journey into the realm of fairy tale. One thing in particular that he mentioned was that