

not being hypocritical. Many members took their obligations seriously and paid a substantial portion of their income to ensure that those facilities were made available in their constituencies.

We have said there is no justification for increasing the \$8,000 portion of our income, but there is a desire and a need to meet the criteria set by the former government House leader, to provide sufficient income so that we can have a decent and reasonable standard of living for ourselves and our families. There is unquestionably a need to improve the \$18,000 salary, but we say the increase should be equivalent to the increase in the cost of living since 1970. The conclusion of the vast majority of members of my caucus is that members should receive that kind of increase, which is now in the 28 per cent to 30 per cent range. What we regard as necessary expenditures for servicing our constituencies have been met by the government since 1970 so there would be no need for an increase to the \$8,000. We believe that members of parliament should have basically the same standard of living as they had in 1970 or 1971, and in our view anything beyond that is unjustified.

The hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville said yesterday that a cost of living increase alone was not sufficient because it did not take into account increased productivity. He acknowledged that it is a little difficult to assess the productivity of members of parliament.

Mr. Baldwin: How about speeches?

Mr. Broadbent: We have had no problem with the Conservatives in that regard in this debate. There has been zero productivity—that no, zero plus one.

Mr. Railton: Do you accept the ICI?

Mr. Broadbent: No, the consumer price index is our criteria. The hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville said that we should receive an increase that is not only based on the cost of living but also on productivity. We reject that argument, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Jamieson: You are afraid your productivity is too low.

Mr. Broadbent: The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Jamieson) says our productivity is too low, but I contend it is the cabinet's productivity that is too low. We reject the argument of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville because we believe that those of us who are in the top 5 per cent—or, depending on your criteria, the top 1½ per cent—of the income level of Canada should call a halt to increases in our income beyond that which is necessary to keep us at the standard of living to which we have been accustomed. We say that anything more than that is unjust until the average income earner and the poor catch up.

It is as simple as that, Mr. Speaker. If there is anything that I feel deeply about, that is it. In this country we do not have a narrowing of the gap between rich and poor, but a widening. Every bit of statistical evidence, whether from government or other sources, documents that fact. In this country one-quarter of the children live in poverty and one-fifth or one-sixth of the total families live in

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poverty. We have the working poor and the poor who are not working. Not only members of parliament, but all Canadians whose incomes are in the top 5 per cent should not be looking for increases in their salaries. But, I say, improve their cost of living position.

● (1610)

An hon. Member: Motherhood!

Mr. Broadbent: That is a typical Liberal comment. It seems to be the history of the Liberal Party in Canada; I say that seriously. The Liberal Party in Canada, particularly since Mackenzie King, has said that we need progressive income tax measures. They say: Let us have that. Let us permit trade unions to exist, and let us do a number of things along these lines; then we can really overcome inequality. However, it has not worked. It did not work in Mackenzie King's time and it has not worked since.

I repeat, we have almost one million children in this, one of the richest countries in the world, who live in poverty. Yet when we get up and talk about narrowing the gap in incomes, a Liberal sniggers and says "motherhood". That shows how seriously they take the problem of inequality. I know there are a number of Liberals who believe in the notion of equality, but I think most of them philosophically do not. We in this party do.

I say to all members who believe we have to do something about inequality in this country that the only way to move in that direction is for those with high incomes, whether they be in the top 5 per cent or the top 20 per cent, to say we must stop, we must hold the line in terms of our income position until the rest of the people in this country catch up. There is no better example members of parliament can set than holding the line with their own incomes. We believe in cost of living increases, but not one cent more until we have rid this land of poverty. We must take steps to get the average and lower income people into a more preferable position.

I want to make one last point in defence of the reasonable position we are arguing, namely, a non-inflationary kind of policy. Quite apart from the issue of equity or fairness of distribution of income in Canada, the point so forcibly made by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands bears repetition by myself just by way of summary. If we want to set an example for other groups in terms of what is a fair income demand, we cannot do it by bringing in a measure to increase our own incomes by 50 per cent immediately, or by a series of amendments that would give us a minimum 33½ per cent increase but, by means of an escalator, very rapidly an effective 50 per cent increase. In my view, that would deeply undermine any serious effort by the government to get operational in Canada some kind of voluntary restraint on incomes policy. This is a very serious abdication of economic leadership on the part of the government.

For these reasons, we as a party will vote against this bill. We will try at the committee stage to have some amendments accepted. We hope by that time the voices of reason and justice in all parties will prevail and we will get the kind of changes to the bill which that kind of attitude would reflect.