

Senate and House of Commons Act

Mr. Beatty: What would you do about Ian Deans?

Mr. Rodriguez: The pay cuts would be meaningful if I had the power to tell the Prime Minister that the Senate goes. He keeps appointing more Tory hacks and flacks into the Senate, and that creates an expenditure that is costing taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. I do not think the Canadian taxpayers are interested in these symbols. They are interested in meaningful leadership in the handling of taxpayers' dollars.

I said that we will vote for the Bill. We have no axe to grind and will not hold it up. We have no reason for not supporting it. However, it only goes so far because it is symbolism of the lowest rank. It is not backed up by meaningful behaviour patterns on the part of the Government.

In conclusion, I want to say that the Government has a responsibility to lead. I accuse the Government of not showing leadership with respect to this Bill.

Another thing that really bothers me—

Mr. Nunziata: I thought you were concluding.

• (1220)

Mr. Rodriguez: One of the things that really bothers me is things like the situation of which I read in this morning's *Toronto Star*. It says a lot to Canadians. A Canadian Press story appeared in today's edition of *The Toronto Star* entitled "Tory bagmen study new pitch to well-to-do". In part the article reads:

Well-to-do Progressive Conservatives may get a chance to dine privately with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney for a \$5,000 contribution to the Party.

What is the symbolism of that? It goes on to indicate:

Flushed with the success of the Tory 500 Club, the Party is considering creating a select category within that group—called governors—

Mr. Blaikie: That is a nice American phrase.

Mr. Rodriguez: I think it has imperialist overtones. The article continues:

—to encourage donations of \$5,000 a year, said Brian Gallery, 500 Club chairman.

Is that believable? Mr. Speaker, guess how much is membership in The 500 Club? The article indicates:

Membership in The 500 Club is \$1,000 a year.

Membership in The 500 Club is \$1,000 per year, exactly what Members of Parliament are being asked to give up in their wages.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I ask the Hon. Member to show the relevance of his remarks to the Bill before us.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, the relevancy is that we will not all belong to the club. I want to make that crystal clear. There are at least 70 Members in the House who will not join the club. I do not want people to get the impression that all of us will join the club. It is a \$1,000 membership, and the Tories

can write it off on their income tax returns. We are not applying for membership in the club. The article continues:

Among the benefits for governors would likely be a private dinner "with the members themselves and a guest, hopefully the Prime Minister,"—

It continues:

Governors would also be entitled to trade in their 500 Club lapel pins and ties for new pins and ties with a G on them.

Mr. Blaikie: It is the Tory answer to the G-string.

Mr. Rodriguez: Right. They should have at least put a T on it. The article goes on to indicate:

But the main attraction would be the recognition "and the satisfaction that you are a governor and that you have contributed," he said.

The new pitch would be modelled on the Republican Eagles club in the United States, which has a \$10,000-a-year membership fee and provides regular meetings with party leaders, including President Ronald Reagan.

This kind of behaviour on the part of the Government raises question in the public's mind about the hollow symbolism of what is in Bill C-20. If the principle of the Bill is to show that Members of Parliament are examples of leadership on the whole question of cutting Government expenditures, how is the Government following through with its expenditures from the larger purse of the public?

The article about the new 500 Club governors indicates that in fact the Tories are tied in with a very elitist element in society. In fact, they have to keep handing out the porkbarrel consistently. Dalton Camp would have probably belonged to the club. They will now have a barrel into which they can reach any time and pick governors for the thousands of appointments they will have.

Mr. McDermid: Ian Deans is inquiring about a membership.

Mr. Blaikie: In Manitoba these memberships are going for five cents a piece.

Mr. Rodriguez: That is right. It has been said that no Conservatives from Manitoba are joining. As a matter of fact, the Conservative Party of Manitoba wants to secede.

Mr. Nunziata: Why?

Mr. Rodriguez: I think they have some problems there.

The Tories are institutionalizing porkbarrelling with the particular kind of structure they are setting up. The Liberals did it as just a normal behaviour, as a way of life. The Conservatives are now raising it to a new level of sophistication. They are establishing structures or governorships. Of course any governor would want to serve his country, but the Tories should hang their heads in shame.

It is the Party of Tom Cossitt. That hon. gentleman made a name for himself in the House by exposing the Liberals consistently. He was correct to do that. He was interested in how many bulbs were on the Christmas tree at 24 Sussex