

Members' Salaries

have to get up and evaluate yourself, or evaluate your neighbour. This is not something that people like. However, in the absence of other procedure, what else is there? An independent committee? How independent, and where do you find them? Hon. members know that an independent committee is nothing more than a very convenient way of escaping your responsibility.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mackasey: I know that others want to participate. I just want to say that since 1962 we in this House of Commons have worked an average of 150 days a year. Ontario has worked 105; Quebec, 104. As I mentioned, in the great socialistic havens they work 70 days, 60 days, 65 days.

Mr. Woolliams: What about British Columbia? They increased their salary \$25,000. How many days did they work?

Mr. Mackasey: They never work. They show up now and then. That was obvious in the last federal election. They were just about obliterated.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mackasey: The worst trap we can get into is the percentage game. One of the unfairest and unkindest things we as members of parliament often do,—we are now suffering for it in the Press—is get up and holler because the grainhandlers got a 39 per cent settlement and the Great Lakes Seamen 65 per cent. We must do a little soul searching. They received 65 per cent of what, 39 per cent of what, over what period and in return for what—increased productivity?

I remember a case in Vancouver. After signing a collective agreement, this person complained about the cost of the settlement. I asked him if, as a favour, he would let me know the cost of a round trip on one of the ships, the log of which he had kept assiduously for 12 years. He was courteous enough to write me and say that every round trip, under the new collective agreement where the workers had received, according to the papers, a 44 per cent increase, every time that ship made its trip from Vancouver to the Orient and back, he saved \$58,000 over the previous contract because of a changing in the wording that removed restrictive work practices. You did not see that on page one of the Vancouver *Sun* or the Vancouver *Province*.

We are all suffering, all members of parliament, from some of our own indiscretion when we talk about the worker receiving a 40 per cent, 30 per cent, 20 per cent or 15 per cent increase. It is an increase of what? On what is it based? A person earning \$2 an hour should get a 100 per cent increase, whereas a person earning \$100,000 may only be entitled to a 5 per cent increase. However, any member of parliament who does not have the courage of his convictions to do his job, and that includes raising his own wages, does not deserve any increase.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mackasey: I am at a disadvantage, Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby comes in, espe-

[Mr. Mackasey.]

cially when he has been on television and has forgotten to take off his make-up. It makes me feel older than ever. As a long-time resident of Oshawa, and as one who has been close to the trade union movement, he should know that people are entitled to a decent income. He should know it is impossible to have the type of Utopian society that he described, where everyone does the same kind of work and receives the same income. There is no such society on the face of the earth, and there never will be. Furthermore, it would be a pretty sad world if it ever came to that state.

I suggest that the New Democrats keep supporting the major parties on our social legislation, keep helping us to improve family allowances, unemployment insurance, the Canada Assistance Plan and the Old Age Pension. Take credit now and again, because you are dwindling in number, but between now and tomorrow think it over, summon up your courage, join the two major parties and vote for what is a bill of restraint, one which will not force us to go home and hide our heads in shame. If you are not worth 30 cents for each constituent in your riding, you have no right to be here.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, after the eloquence of the hon. member, which locked members in here, I am a little dubious about putting forth my modest and moderate contribution to this debate. However, I also have convictions, and I want to express them to this House. I hope hon. members will listen to my convictions, even if they do not happen to agree with them.

I am opposed to the present bill, Mr. Speaker. It is not because I am opposed to members of parliament receiving any increase, but under the present circumstances the increases that are proposed are wrong. They are unjustifiable. We must remember the context. We must pay some attention to the current realities of life. As members of parliament we have a great responsibility as leaders of this country.

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Some members may not realize this, but we are in the midst of a worldwide crisis of inflation and a rapidly rising cost of living. Some people apparently do not accept this, but it happens to be a fact of life, and a very important fact of life. We ourselves, even on the present scale, can put up with inflation, with a measure of hardship perhaps in some cases, but none of us experience the grave hardship which affects those at the lower end of the income scale, the working poor and those who depend on pensions and small fixed incomes. An upward turn in the inflationary spiral signifies not just inconvenience or a lower standard of living for these people but real destitution and deprivation. I was elected, Mr. Speaker, to help old age pensioners and others with low incomes; I was not elected to help myself.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: I bet the old age pensioners worry about you.

Mr. Broadbent: No manners!