

The net effect of that reduction, if one considers point two, under the escalation beginning in 1976 is that members would receive under the new proposal—

An hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. Broadbent: How can it be nonsense until you have heard the figure under this proposal.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. I do not wish to unduly restrict what he is saying to the House. However, a statement on motions is after all an indication of what may happen to the bill and is an indication of the position to be taken by parties in respect thereto. The hon. member certainly should have an opportunity to indicate the position of his group with regard to this statement, but I wonder whether the hon. member is not going beyond that and actually getting into debate on the bill.

Mr. Broadbent: I shall summarize very quickly, Mr. Speaker. I simply point out that I have taken less time than the Government House Leader. If one totals up the income for regular members of parliament under the new proposal with the escalator clause, I think that between 1975 and 1978 inclusive, you would get a total of \$160,882 which is \$4,000 more than the original government proposal. It is for this reason, among others which I shall make clear in debate later this afternoon, that the New Democratic Party will have absolutely nothing to do with this proposal.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, there would be a very simple way of solving the objections and it would be to allow the use of an optional formula whereby those who need a raise would accept it while those who do not need it would refuse it.

Mr. Speaker, the debate going on in the House and especially in the news media deals with the salaries of politicians. A proposal has now been made and I wish to confirm on behalf of the Social Credit Party of Canada that we have taken part in those discussions, because we also have our own concept of the member's function and also because we were directly involved in those discussions.

Generally, we endorse those proposals subject to minor changes which I will state later on. Two particular points urge me to speak now hoping that the leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) will understand my message. Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House, especially those from Quebec—it will reach your corner later on—are more especially interested in the specific duties that we must carry out in our constituencies. We have a typical concept of the member's function. We are indebted for it to the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) who insists that members must give personalized service to every citizen within their constituencies and be present there every weekend. We have learned from him to provide a good service and to defend our constituents against civil servants. Our notion of the function of a House member is such that our fights in the House stem from principles and not from petty politics.

Members' Salaries

Because of this notion, we are full-time members exclusively concerned with our duty to represent our constituents and fight for their rights, so that our working conditions are quite different from those of others.

Mr. Speaker, while my colleagues, the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert), the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne), the hon. member for Rimouski (Mr. Allard), the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau), the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette), the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise), the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) and the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) must use their cars every weekend to travel within their respective constituencies, there are hon. members from eastern and western Canada who are not faced with the same sacrifices.

When a member of the House represents a constituency like mine and that each time he wants to settle an unemployment insurance case he has to call Drummondville long distance, that is an expense other members do not incur. This is why I think that must inspire—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I simply want to say to the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) exactly the same thing I said to the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent).

Mr. Fortin: I understood that, Mr. Speaker. This is why I think that in considering the government's proposal, it is important to keep in mind the member's role. It is important to act in such a way that the idea people have of the politician fully warrants these salary increases.

● (1530)

What disappoints us is that we keep on maintaining the Senate and increasing the senators' allowances, although they do not have to provide any relevant vouchers. As for Social Crediters it would not be difficult for us to provide vouchers. In any event, we are going to keep on taking a very active part in these discussions.

Since this question greatly interests the public and the media, I wonder if it would not be in order to suggest to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) that rather than referring the bill to a standing committee we discuss it in committee of the whole House. The general public could then assist to the proceedings, and every member could set forth his position.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to forget nor put in the same boat all members, from sea to sea, since the working conditions for a member from Vancouver, Halifax, Toronto, Quebec City or Montreal are not and will never be the same as those for a member who represents an urban or semi-urban constituency.

That is why we will take an active part in these proceedings, for we, in the Social Credit Party of Canada, have never relied on any contributions from the unions to do our job.

[English]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, and I assure Your Honour and the House that it is a point of order and not an attempt to get into the debate. My point relates to the terms of the Governor General's recommendation which, I suggest, will