

Government Orders

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Speaker, if those are short, sharp questions, I guess we have a new meaning for short, sharp questions. The member knows that the various agreements we have signed have different closing dates. All those closing dates were prior to the February 26 budget. In many cases they settled for 4.2 per cent for back pay, but from the point of the signing of that contract forward it is zero, three and three. They accepted it without a great deal of difficulty. They realized the position the government is in regarding restraint.

I would be pleased to see if I can get the details of those various contracts.

Mrs. Finestone: Table them.

Mr. Kempling: I cannot table them. The minister can table them. At any rate, they are private between the Treasury Board and the unions themselves and we would have to get their permission to do it.

I do not see that we have bargained in bad faith. I think we have done a very good job thus far. This legislation is necessary in order that we are able to continue our economic policies.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member did not answer the last question regarding the fact that the public is under the impression that MP's, senators, presidents of large corporations, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, and many other people, have already received a salary increase.

This impression is there, Mr. Speaker, and it is true that in the case of MP's the law says that on the 1st of January there will be an automatic increase in salary amounting to the cost of living minus 1 per cent. Like myself, some hon. members would be willing, Mr. Speaker, to give back the amount involved.

My question to the hon. member for Burlington is very straightforward: Is he, personally, willing to return to the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Government of Canada, money he received since January 1st in order to bring himself to the same level as civil servants, members of the Alliance or other unions, which are subject to this 0-3-3 policy?

[English]

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Speaker, I find this rather fascinating. I cannot remember the member for Ottawa—Vanier at any time when parliamentary salaries or allowances were being negotiated standing up in his place and saying: "No, no, we don't want that". But now in a grandstanding way he is able to stand up and make an issue like this.

Our salaries and allowances, as the member knows, are set by statute and by agreement. They are effective January 1.

From January 1992, that period on, members of Parliament will have zero, three and three in effect. That is the way it is. Everybody will have zero, three and three: RCMP, Canadian Armed Forces, everybody who works for an agency or board, or Crown corporation. Anyone who receives a cheque from the Government of Canada will have zero, three and three. That is the way it will be. We are all equal as far as that is concerned.

The Public Service settlement that was made last year was 4.6 per cent. How far back do you want to roll it?

Mr. Gauthier: The question is simple. Is the member for Burlington ready to roll back his salary like many of us here on this side are willing to do—it is not grandstanding—so that we can meet with his government's policy, the policy of the Minister of Supply and Services of zero, three and three. It is not grandstanding. It is a simple question. Yes or no?

Mr. Kempling: On January 1, 1992, members of Parliament will receive zero, three and three. That is it. That rolls back whatever we have had in our statutes. It is grandstanding.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Hamilton East for a brief intervention.

Mrs. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Yes, and I would also like to reserve my right to raise a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

I would like to ask the member a very direct question. It has been asked once before. He refuses to answer. Is he willing to show Canadians that he is going to set the example by rolling back his salary as of last January?