

future the legislation contains no provision for regularizing the process of reviewing salaries of Members of Parliament. In a letter to all members of this House, the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) drew to our attention the procedures for review employed in New Zealand. The leader of my party has suggested relating MP's salaries to those paid to a selected salary classification in the public service. Many other suggestions purporting to have a similar effect have been put forward, but none of these is included in this legislation. Because this legislation makes no attempt to regularize the salary review procedure, and because it has the effect of perpetuating the currently entirely unsatisfactory method of salary review, it is bad legislation and I am opposed to it.

My third reason for opposing the legislation is that it does not meet our most pressing needs as members of this House. It does not provide us with the services, the accountable expense allowance—I emphasize the word "accountable"—nor the staff necessary to adequately discharge our duties as Members of Parliament. It does not provide us with the means necessary to provide our constituents with the kind of services they have a right to demand of us. Nothing could do more to assist us in re-establishing this institution as a relevant, important and central institution of our democracy than providing Members of Parliament with the tools properly to do their job. If we were able properly to do our job, I am sure there would be few objections raised to our receiving a salary commensurate with the responsibilities and the demands of our position. However, this legislation makes no provision for levels of service to members necessary to enable them effectively to do their job.

Finally—and this is not my final objection to the legislation but merely the final objection I wish to inflict upon the House this evening—this legislation does not rid us of the very distasteful practice of placing Members of Parliament and Senators in a special category by providing them with a non-accountable expense allowance. As long as the expense allowance remains non-accountable, the public will continue—with every reason—to view with a jaundiced eye our protests of virtue that this money is spent on doing our job. As long as expenses remain unaccountable, the inequities and injustices within this chamber will persist.

Because of the nature of my constituency, it costs me more to represent it properly than it does the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) to represent his, while the hon. member for Churchill (Mr. Simpson), whose constituency covers two-thirds of the land area of Manitoba, encounters more expenses than I do. Yet we all receive the same expense allowance. That is unjust. A fully accountable expense allowance incorporating the substance of the recommendations for classes of expenses, maximum limits and differentials, according to the type of constituency, included in the recommendations of the Beaupré report, would have helped overcome these injustices and inequities. There are no such provisions in the legislation before us; therefore I oppose it.

I now come to the awkward part. I intend to vote against the legislation; but what will I do beyond that,

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should the legislation pass? I can only say I will ensure that I receive no financial benefit from the increased indemnity for the duration of this Parliament, nor will I collect it in the form of back pay should I be re-elected. How I will dispose of it, I have not yet determined, although it will probably be in the form of a gift to the Crown in right of Manitoba because that government at least makes the kind of mistakes which I would be likely to make myself.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rowland: I realize that what I intend to do is merely a gesture and, beyond that, a gesture which is a luxury some members simply cannot afford. For various reasons, including the fact that my children are still too young to involve much in the way of additional expense, and because my parents are still willing to support me to the extent of supplying me with a room and a free car when I am in my constituency, I can afford to make this gesture and thus reinforce my protest against the legislation. Because it is bad legislation, and because I can afford to do it, I am doing it.

I do not feel particularly happy about taking this action. I do not even feel particularly virtuous. I simply feel that this is one of the few occasions presented to me where I can do something meaningful to register my protest against yet another act of stupidity on the part of this government, and I intend to take advantage of it.

As this legislation concerns me directly and no other class of citizen, for once I am placed in the situation where I do not have to vote for an essentially bad piece of legislation because it has some good points and will help some people. For a change, I can say it is bad legislation and I want no part of it. That is what I am doing.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. member permit a question before he resumes his seat?

Mr. Rowland: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): In view of the sincerity of the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Rowland), I would ask if he is in favour of the increases that the NDP government of Manitoba is giving the total membership—an increase from \$7,600 to \$12,000 per year—in view of the fact that the provincial governments sit approximately two and one half months per year? Does the hon. member favour that?

Mr. Rowland: Mr. Speaker, I can say quite frankly that I think the legislators in Manitoba are underpaid.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rowland: I have not seen the details of the legislation to which the hon. member has referred. If the legislation is framed in the same way that the legislation