

the committee would do this, and if the government were prepared to accept a recommendation in favour of some technique of dealing with parliamentary salaries and allowances in the future, Members of Parliament in years to come would not be required to go through the embarrassing and humiliating experience we are called upon to go through in this debate.

I would urge the government to consider this proposal very seriously. I honestly believe that if we were prepared to remove the tax free allowance and work out a technique by which parliamentary salaries were dealt with by some independent body, we would be helping to improve the image of parliament and make the government more credible when it deals with some of the economic issues facing the country.

[Translation]

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, I have here the report of the Advisory Committee on Parliamentary salaries and Expenses, report which preceded the bill before us, namely Bill C-242. That report is called the Beaupré Report in honour of the committee chairman, Mr. T. N. Beaupré. At the beginning there is a letter dated November 16, 1970, addressed to the Hon. Allan J. MacEachen, President of the Privy Council, House of Commons, Ottawa, which reads thus:

Dear Sir:

We, the members of the Advisory Committee appointed pursuant to Order-in-Council P.C. 1970-230 of February 5th, 1970, have the honour to submit the following Report.

Yours sincerely,

T. N. BEAUPRÉ

That report was presented on November 16, 1970, following a request made in February 1970.

The least I can say is that, contrary to the slow pace of other investigators hired by the government to work with many commissions, the members of the Beaupré commission did not waste much time and for this they deserve congratulations. But I do not quite understand some of the ensuing recommendations.

In fact, Mr. Beaupré, who is also president of Domtar, sees quite differently the needs of his own employees. Domtar is a company whose importance is recognized both in Canada and in the rest of the business world. In addition to owning several plants and controlling several others, this company is a fairly big stockholder in several areas of the Canadian economy. Among the Domtar plants, there is first the Quévillon plant which I heard about from the people of the Portneuf riding who were hired when this plant was built and who are still working at the production of paper.

In Donnacona, where I live, we are particularly aware of the Domtar plants. We have two of those plants; the first one manufactures newsprint and the other building materials which are well-advertised on television. These plants are rather important and yet, in the field of salaries, the same war between employer and employees is going on. Every second year, the employees must negotiate for two to five months to get what they want. In the case of one of those plants, the last salary increase was granted two years ago. At that time, the employees won a

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24¢ an hour increase, to be granted progressively. The 24¢ an hour increase granted by Mr. Beaupré to his employees is to be put in effect in three stages for people whose income is only \$6,000 per year.

Strangely enough, whereas hon. members already earn \$18,000, Mr. Beaupré recommends for them a \$7,000 increase at once.

Thereby Mr. Beaupré contradicts himself, I think. And one wonders where he is heading and what he wants, for he has advised the Donnacona employees in writing that though the time has come for negotiating better working conditions, the former agreement having just expired, it is no use seeking any increase this year.

While reading Mr. Beaupré's report, one wonders whether the \$7,000 increase in parliamentary allowances which he deems appropriate for hon. members is not some form of acknowledgment of the grants he has already received from the federal government, or a manoeuvre to obtain favours in the years to come.

I find inconceivable a policy under which the government increases members' allowances without worrying at all about parliamentary services. I shall quote from the Beaupré committee report, since it contains parts quite favourable to the constituents. First, it recommends equitable financial provisions in respect to the members of Parliament. Moreover, the committee suggests to restructure the said provisions so that each member may provide the Canadian taxpayers with services as efficient as possible.

The minister's proposals disregard completely the second aim suggested by the Committee and deal with the first somewhat inadequately. Perhaps the parliamentarians need an increased allowance but I am not in full agreement with its timing. The government is requesting manufacturers and workers in private enterprise to limit their demands for higher wages to the productivity growth rate; however, can we do less than those men? Can we vote ourselves this increase without giving a single thought to our constituents? I do not believe so.

Since 1965, except in unemployment and taxes has this government proposed other increases? To ask the question is answering it.

I would now like to quote excerpts of the Beaupré report because I feel that we might perhaps get to the core of the problem:

In our opinion, the conditions under which parliamentarians are required to conduct the business of a nation... are completely inadequate. Members of Parliament... are often deprived of even the most fundamental facilities requisite to the efficient performance of their duties.

The committee is satisfied that important improvements must be made in the facilities provided to members and in the methods of financing them. The need to make these improvements is urgent and it will become more urgent and more serious as the importance of the role of the individual member in the parliamentary system continues to expand. New types of social and technical legislation will present members with the need for additional research facilities in order that they may be better informed. We were struck by the fact that so many able and dedicated members who wished to make positive contributions to issues and legislation both as individuals and in committees were unable to do so because of the lack of adequate administrative and research assistance. This can lead to frustration and