

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Then I shall detain the house for only a very few minutes longer. I am not suggesting for one moment the expenditure of money of the Dominion of Canada for the financial benefit of members of the House of Commons. What I am proposing is this, that the scheme should be completely self-liquidating. My suggestion is—it is definitely and seriously made; and it may not help some of us older fellows; that is perfectly true—that we should have some housing, without all this nonsense which we have to go through when we come here to Ottawa. We should be charged rentals sufficient to carry the thing, and to liquidate it over a period of years.

I know this cannot be done at once. My thought is this: why can we not begin with one block of flats? For example, a man and his wife would want two bedrooms, a kitchenette and a living room, and that is all. Let us pay for it for the months we are not here, if necessary. But sir, with the greatest respect I do say that those of us who come from distances and who bring our wives with us require accommodation. For example, this year with a stroke of good luck I have a small house. I should say the hon. member for Calgary East (Mr. Harkness) got it, and our two families are sharing it. I admit I could not have better joint tenants in the world than these two people.

But to my mind it is just complete nonsense to ask us to come here without accommodation—and, of course, nobody asked us. We ran elections, and then we had to come. I do not mind admitting that before I came here in January I sold the house in which I had lived for something more than twenty years. I had to do that. Why? I could not close it up; if I had, the newspapers would have been full of letters saying that, in view of the housing shortage, for closing my house I should be hanged, drawn and quartered at dawn. And probably that would be right.

I had rented the house. But, even in the case of renting it to friends, those friends had children, and some of the furniture which probably we were proud of—well, it came out second best in the struggle.

I do not want this laughed off, because it is a suggestion well worth consideration. We could experiment, anyway. Let us, for example, consider some of the members whose wives are not here. Why not give them a place where they could have single rooms, baths and kitchenettes. Make them pay for that accommodation. But let us have a place here where we can anchor.

Has anyone ever thought about those of us who come from distances; have they thought

about what we have to do? We have to move all sorts of truck back and forth. There is no place where we can store it—unless we place it in storage. Sometimes we do that. I am not talking about the money angle of the matter; I am talking about the bother.

We are now sitting in Ottawa for about six months each year. We are now all rushing to see if we can get accommodation on the trains to go home. I have tried to get accommodation for the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th—accommodation for myself on the main line trains.

Mr. HOWE: Try the air lines.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): I am unlike the minister, because I hate flying. He loves it, because he gets a degree at the end of every trip he takes. So he ought to love it. But, so far as flying is concerned, with me flying is out. I came east twice on big planes. But I started that too late in life, because when the plane went down I lifted it up; when it rolled this way I pushed it back that way. I was never so busy in my life, never worked so hard—and I had to cancel all my appointments next day.

I admit I am a coward—but I am through with flying. I will not do it any more. It is all right for young fellows like the minister—particularly with the rewards he gets at the end of each trip. So, that will do, so far as the flying part of it is concerned.

I now close with this simple statement. I think there are many hon. members who come short distances who would like single rooms where they could leave their baggage if there was an Easter holiday. Then they would not have to give up their rooms in the hotels. But certainly those of us who come from long distances are entitled to something which would not cost the people of Canada a cent. Every time we get a little raise in pay, which incidentally does not even compare with the rise in the cost of living; every time we get anything of that sort there is a holler. So far as I am concerned, let them holler. But they would have no holler, because I would charge sufficient money that there would not be a burden of one five-cent piece upon the treasury of the Dominion of Canada.

I do not suggest that the minister can do a great deal this year, but he can give my suggestion consideration and let us have his well considered views when his estimates come up. If he does not do that when he comes to bat before this House of Commons I am going to start recruiting around here to see what we can do to give him a rough ride.

Hon. ALPHONSE FOURNIER (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I was quite