

Private Members' Business

The other problem with the hon. member's suggestion, as I have indicated, is we would end up with great inequality in the House where two members of Parliament sitting side by side in the House might find themselves earning different amounts because one happened to draw a private pension and one happened to draw a public pension.

Mr. Solomon: That happens now.

Mr. Milliken: Yes, it happens now because members come here with varying amounts of money. Some are well to do. Some may have a very substantial investment income. They still get paid a salary of \$64,000 and change for doing their job as a member of Parliament. Every single member of Parliament gets that.

The ones who are getting paid extra, and I point this out to the hon. member, are the ones who are doing work which is additional to their work as members of Parliament. He may not think that the additional work is significant but the fact is all the ones who are getting paid extra are being paid extra because they do additional work. All the ones who are not doing additional work in this House are receiving the same amount of money.

I quote the hon. member for Calgary Centre who justified one of his own members receiving a pension from a provincial legislature by saying: "The member the Liberal MP asked me about is not guilty of double dipping. It is not double dipping. This individual served in the provincial legislature. This individual resigned from the provincial legislature. This individual offered his services to the Canadian public on a federal basis".

The hon. member for Lisgar—Marquette loves it when I quote one of his colleagues.

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. I finally heard the fact that I can agree with him, that what the member for Lethbridge is doing is not double dipping. We have heard the Liberals so often saying: "The double dipper is sitting right there". Finally they have seen the light. Thank you for that, Mr. Speaker. We are making progress in the House. That is what I like to see.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this bill. I listened to the very eloquent remarks of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

I am sorry I was not here for previous remarks but I was in the other place watching the other place do the right thing. NDP members would have acknowledged it at one point, but more recently they do not acknowledge quite as much that gun control is a good thing.

• (1800)

In any case, the other place passed gun control, as the member for Kingston and the Islands indicated, 64 to 28. That is excellent news. All Canadians, except for a handful of New Democrats and a larger handful of Reformers, would agree. That is a very good thing.

Mr. Speller: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I heard the hon. member talking about something going on in the other place. What did he say the Conservatives did over there? I was not quite clear as to what he said.

The Deputy Speaker: I appreciate that the hon. member is being light hearted, I believe, but we do have rules of relevance in the House. As you know, the Chair often sits here and squirms and wonders why we do not observe those rules. Normally the Chair waits for a member to get up and say that somebody is speaking totally off the subject. I am sure the hon. chief whip to the government party will make his remarks relevant to the subject very soon.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the bill, but at the same time I am also pleased to inform the House that some Conservative members in the other place voted for the bill, some voted against the bill, some abstained and so on. In other words it is the same thing as usual: several different messages coming from the Tories.

We are back to Bill C-314. I am pleased to be speaking about that. The hon. member from the New Democratic Party is proposing this bill to us today. As my colleague for Kingston and the Islands has indicated, this is not a bill that some of us are willing to support.

The bill would create a number of inconsistencies. Apparently one of the issues is the concern for public funds. It is interesting that some public pensions would be applicable in terms of the reduction from salaries and others would not. For instance, if an MP happened to be older than 65 years of age, the CPP or QPP provisions would not be reduced, even though that is a public pension as well, but other pensions would. OAS would not be covered, veterans pensions and so on, but military pensions would. You can see that there are a number of inconsistencies created in what the hon. member is trying to address.

The government has gone a very long way toward improving the pension plan for members of Parliament. I believe the government has done the right thing. I was pleased to support the government's initiative. I was pleased to defend it. I did not happen to think there was much wrong with the system as it existed even prior to that change, but some people feel, and those in the Reform Party are in that category, that MPs should have less pension and virtually double the salary. This is what the member for Calgary Centre has suggested.

When I was asked by the media what the chances are of doubling MPs' salaries, I said it is about the same as the chances