

House of Commons

There are other details which would have to be worked out. Pay would start on, say, September 1 and continue on a monthly basis. The fares of successful candidates to Ottawa would be paid, as well as their return fares if they completed the course. A married student might receive between \$4,500 and \$5,500, plus \$1,000 in respect of the first child and \$500 for each additional child. Such a scale could be worked out. The program would be under the direction of the House of Commons internship committee and I believe the staff in the Speaker's office could handle the operational duties. It would be best, I think, if the scheme were confined to backbenchers.

I mentioned this idea at a meeting in my part of the country not long ago and one of the editors of the local paper wrote an editorial about it. With all due humility and modesty I should like to put a large part of this editorial on record. It is from the *Guelph Daily Mercury* and the heading is: "Political Internship A Sound Proposal". It reads in part as follows:

Alfred Hales' proposal to allow university graduates to serve political "internships" excited our interest. The idea has much to recommend it.

Mr. Hales said the plan would be invaluable to members of parliament who are required these days to do an ever-increasing amount of research to keep up with new developments on a wide front. He suggested the proposed "internship" should be open to graduates in journalism, law and political science. These should naturally be the people most interested in politics although we do not see why it should not be open to graduates in any field.

In any case, politics has become a difficult and complicated profession, making stiffer demands all the time on those who practice the art. There is a great need for a training ground in practical politics and Mr. Hales' proposal would go a long way toward filling that need.

Too often in the past has the popular and charming fellow down the street or on the farm been sent to Ottawa simply because he happened to be popular and charming. We send people to parliament to do the most important job in the country, but seldom ask to see their qualifications.

To send a man who has only a background of experience in township, county or municipal affairs, to recommend him is like sending a junior hockey player to the National Hockey League. He is not ready for it. And while he may make it in the end, a lot of time goes by before he does—time that is spent on the bench listening to the coach and watching the professionals.

A program such as Mr. Hales suggests would provide a nucleus of young political hopefuls with valuable first-hand experience and training which would stand them in good stead should they decide to make politics a career. And the country as a whole would benefit.

I put this on record to show the view expressed in an editorial in my constituency.
● (6.30 p.m.)

I should like to conclude by putting two quotations on the record concerning a similar program which has been in operation in the United States Congress. They are from letters written by Congressmen. Here is one from a letter written by Mr. Carl Elliott of Alabama:

Allow me to congratulate you on the exceptionally capable manner in which you have organized and directed the Congressional Fellowship Program this year. I have had an opportunity to observe several of the Fellows and could not be more impressed. It was, as you know, my great pleasure to have Mr. Edmund B. Lambeth in my office during the period from the first of the year until the Easter recess. Ed's work was, by all standards, truly outstanding. In view of the added burden placed on my office staff this year, I hardly can see what I would have done without him. He was, at all times, both alert and thoughtful, with a great gift for writing. His mastery of the important tasks assigned to him was a pleasure to behold.

I can think of no comments or suggestions which I might make regarding the operation of your program, with the possible exception that I would be glad to see you revise your policy so as to enable me to take on another fellow next year.

My second quotation is a short paragraph from a letter written by Mr. Ullman, Congressman from Oregon:

From every point of view, Dave's work was outstanding. He came at a time when my activities were somewhat restricted, moving into a schedule of full responsibilities with a minimum of prompting. His services to me as my Ways and Means Committee advisor, as well as his general duties in handling correspondence and agency work, were done with efficiency and good judgment. I have no criticism except that his term with me should have been longer so that we could benefit even more from the assignment.

Here is a sentence from another letter:

From my experience with Tom, I have learned how useful it would be to me to have a full time "legislative assistant" as an addition to our regular staff, to help me with the load of reading and analysis and more thorough study of legislation.

We in Canada, Mr. Speaker, are launching into a big operation in our parliament and must look forward to thinking in broader and wider terms. I can visualize someone speaking against this motion saying it may not be necessary because recently, as a result of a recommendation of the special committee on organization and procedure, we established a new branch for research in the library to aid hon. members. I believe it has a staff of eight and the budget for the branch runs between \$75,000 to \$80,000 a year.

However, this is a rather impersonal service. I do not think we get the same results from it