

Mr. SPEAKER: There has been a little discussion about that matter in the house before. The hon. member will understand that I was appointed Speaker last September. We had a session which lasted until the middle of December, and we started again in March. As hon. members know, it is difficult for the Speaker to be on duty in the house from morning until night. I have not had much time to investigate and to see what improvements can be made in the house along that line. The House of Commons, in common with other departments, was obliged to take on temporary officers and employees to replace those who left the service of the house to join the forces. It has been the policy of the civil service commission not to appoint any new permanent employee; but the hon. member and the committee may be assured that the staff of the house are satisfied with their positions. Naturally they are nervous about their jobs because they are temporaries. That is only human. It is quite natural for them to wonder what is going to happen to them in the future. During the recess I hope that I shall have time, and I am sure I will, to look into these matters; we shall make recommendations to the civil service commission to make permanent those who should be permanent, and we shall find out if it is possible to give them an increase in salary.

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): I hope His Honour realizes that I am not criticizing or casting any reflection upon him in any way. I realize that he has scarcely had time yet to go into all these details. I am merely bringing these points to his attention so that, if there are any injustices, then these injustices can be rectified. It is unfair to have men who are employed all year round paid at the rate of \$4 a day, even with the cost of living bonus. It is extraordinarily difficult for a man to bring up a family on that salary at the present time. We in this chamber should set a better example to the nation as a whole. I should like His Honour to consider putting on a permanent basis all these men who have been here for several years and who are still on a temporary basis, although employed the year round. I should like His Honour to consider increasing the salary of these men so that they would at least be paid the same as the officials of the Senate who work fewer hours. We get excellent service not only from the protective staff but from the messengers and from all others. I think we should pay more recognition to them. The most appropriate way for doing that is to ensure them that their living standards will be as high as possible.

[Mr. Stewart.]

Mr. RICHARD (Ottawa East): I have had an opportunity of bringing this matter to the attention of the Speaker from time to time. I am perfectly satisfied that he is working on the problem and that the staff of the house is being well treated and will be well treated in the future.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I just add a word of agreement to what has been said by the hon. member for Winnipeg North. Perhaps it may be a help to His Honour to know that he has considerable backing of the House of Commons. I think His Honour will find that all through the house there is pretty general agreement that something should be done for these men because they are doing a magnificent job. We ought to support the representations of the hon. member for Winnipeg North in that connection, so that His Honour the Speaker will know he is not alone in his desire to see that these things are done.

Item agreed to.

Library of Parliament —

130. General administration, \$88,391.

Mr. ZAPLITNY: Has any progress been made in the matter of indexing the books in the library? Several hon. members have referred to the fact that it is difficult to find just what is contained in the library. We know it contains almost everything, but we do not know just what is available at any particular time or where it is. Has anything been done so far to implement a recommendation that an index be made of all the books in the library?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have noted the remarks of the hon. member. He will understand that during the war the government decided that all money should be used for war purposes. Since the war is over, we have started to make some improvements in the library, such as lighting and so on. We hope that in the next few months many more improvements will be made. I approve the remarks which have been made during the session, and I shall be pleased if the government decides to give a national library to the country.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I make a suggestion to His Honour. If during the interim period he feels that he will perhaps have more time to deal with some of the urgent matters connected with his duties, may I suggest that he give consideration to the question of whether or not we have the best seating arrangement in the House of Commons from the point of view of carrying on our duties.

My second suggestion is that he watch carefully—and I caution him against this—