

Members' Salaries

where are we going? I have studied this bill, and the Prime Minister will get about \$79,000. That is not peanuts even for a millionaire.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It is \$69,000.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Yes, \$69,000. Then we are to be given a 7 per cent increase each year to cover inflation. This means that the government believes that we will be in this inflationary trend for some time, and we will as long as this government is in power. In a period of ten years, according to the estimates of economists, under this plan the Prime Minister will be securing \$156,585. Where is the government wrestling inflation? There is no answer.

Let me go back to the days when I was Prime Minister. We had to pay \$5,000 a year rent for 24 Sussex Drive; that is to say, Mr. St. Laurent did, I did when I followed him, and Mr. Pearson did after me. This rental payment has been done away with. Neither did we have any armoured dreads; we supplied our own cars and received the same amount that all members of the cabinet received—\$2,000 a year. We had to pay part of the chauffeur's fees and allowances, because part of the time he did some work around 24 Sussex Drive. When I went on holidays the Government of Canada and the people did not pay the expenses. I suppose that was wrong, but that was our idea of responsibility. We kept the expense of operating 24 Sussex Drive down to a few hundred dollars.

This government is profligate with the Canadian taxpayers' money. I need only recite some figures that have come out to tell the story clearly. There have been fabulous expenditures to make the Prime Minister's office attractive so that a person with artistic taste will feel at home. In 1970-71 the total expenditure on the Centre Block office was \$1,042. It was one of the finest offices in Canada. The President of the United States came here and said what an attractive office it was. But in 1971-72 renovations cost \$28,319 and refurbishings \$41,733, for a total of \$70,000.

Just what is going on? Whose money is this? By 1974-75 the total amount spent on renovations was \$45,907 and on refurbishings \$41,838, for a total of \$87,745. What does this mean? When the cabinet spends in this way, there is encouragement to all parts of Canada to do the same. As far as the East Block is concerned, very little has been spent; total expenditures from 1968 to 1975 amount to only \$6,000 odd.

I come now to 24 Sussex Drive. I am told that some would like 24 Sussex Drive to have all the attractiveness of an Arab sheik's home. The total amount spent on renovations and refurbishings between 1968 and 1975 is \$286,503, comprising \$199,146 for renovations and \$87,357 for refurbishings. Were these expenditures ever discussed in the House? They were not, because there is no control today on the part of the House of Commons over expenditures—though there is some hope in some of the changes that you, Sir, have in mind.

I now come to Harrington Lake, the summer place. During my period of office we saved it, and I think total expenditure was about \$50. But since 1968 the amount spent on renovations has been \$20,953 and on refurbish-

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

ings \$4,608, for a total of \$25,561. Such an orgy of expenditure on the part of the leader of a government leads to a looseness that has no regard to the effect it has on inflation within the country.

If there is any doubt up to now about what I have in mind, let me say I intend to vote against this bill, and to do so proudly. However, I know the bill will carry because of the silence that accompanies my remarks. Truth hurts, Mr. Speaker. It sometimes takes a long while to travel to some minds, but truth does hurt. I hope that at this time there will be a realization of what this bill is going to mean. No one need tell me that the Government of Canada had in mind the interests of private members. In giving them an increase, the increases for ministers of the Crown are out of all proportion, and for the Prime Minister it is totally unjustified.

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I rise on third reading in this debate to do two things. One is to pay tribute to one particular member of the House; the second is to state briefly our reasons for opposing this bill and to outline an alternative salary increase which we think would be justified.

Before I do that I want to point out that I deliberately waited in my seat for a few seconds to see whether the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Sharp) would get to his feet to reply to an extremely serious and, if it is not inappropriate for me to say so, extremely able speech by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker). Today we heard a former Prime Minister of this country take part in a very important debate in terms of its real and symbolic significance in the country, yet we have heard no reply on the part of the government to the serious points raised by that right hon. member. Obviously the Acting Prime Minister and other Cabinet ministers have decided to sit the whole issue out.

● (1550)

Yesterday we were at the report stage of the debate, and no minister of the Crown spoke even to the government's own amendments. They were introduced and moved without any speeches to justify the position on what is, after all, a government bill. I hope this afternoon to hear a minister of the Crown, particularly the Acting Prime Minister, outline as best as can be done the government's justification for this bill, and also respond to the serious points raised by the right hon. member for Prince Albert. Surely it is an ultimate admission of shame on the part of the government if ministers do not reply to that right hon. member's serious contribution in this House, a contribution, if I may say so again, by a former Prime Minister. If that speech is totally ignored, surely that is the ultimate condemnation of the government's position on this bill.

In the course of my comments at this third reading stage I want to make two points. I want to pay tribute to one of the most distinguished members in the history of the House of Commons, and he does not know I am going to do this. I refer to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

I would say this of any member of any party in this House who had provided the kind of parliamentary leadership that has been provided in respect of this issue by the