

Compensation

tion of parliamentarians and employees of a vast multidisciplinary organization which assumes responsibilities of direction and management in specialized disciplines, those responsibilities being sometimes similar to those of employees in the private sector. With your leave, sir, I would say that the comparison made by the hon. member is not valid. The needs of both groups, the reasons underlying the definition of their compensation and the points of comparison are quite different. I wonder if the hon. member, when he refers to the elected representative who receives the highest salary and allowances under the Senate and House of Commons Act, means the Prime Minister. I know that such reference was made by the hon. member for Don Valley, but in doing so he made that comparison more difficult.

Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to remind the hon. member of the unique character of the basic problems which their compensation system was suppose to solve. I will refer hon. members to the report of the Advisory Committee on Parliamentary Salaries and Expenses prepared in the early seventies under the chairmanship of Mr. T. N. Beaupré. Generally speaking, the advisory committee refers to the discussions that took place in this House a few years ago and more particularly to the comments made in 1963 by the then prime minister, the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson. The report contains the list of specific problems enumerated by the prime minister to justify the adoption of special provisions pertaining to members of the House. That list mentioned, and I quote:

The maintenance of two residences, one in the riding and one in Ottawa;

With a few exceptions, Mr. Speaker.

Financial sacrifices especially for new members;

Disruption of family life;

Difficulties in educating children;

Difficulty in attracting young candidates because of the loss of income in accepting a political life;

If the financial barrier were allowed to continue as a deterrent to attracting candidates to public life, parliament would lose its representative character as only the financially independent could afford to be members.

In general, Mr. Speaker, it is my opinion that these conditions, although they must necessarily be taken into account in order to establish the salaries of members, do not concern the compensation payable to public servants. The nature and conditions of work differ greatly in both cases and it would not be reasonable to ask for exact comparability between the two systems of remuneration.

I would like to quote again from the Beaupré report and draw the attention of the House to some interesting paragraphs. First:

The establishment of appropriate levels for parliamentary salaries must be based largely on subjective judgment. The position of the federal parliamentarian is unique and therefore, it cannot be easily compared to apparently similar positions in other political jurisdictions, either in Canada or elsewhere, nor to other occupations in Canada. Virtually none of the guidelines normally used to determine rates of remuneration in other sectors of the economy is applicable.

Furthermore, the committee does not "accept the proposal that parliamentary salaries should be related to the salaries

[Mr. Clermont.]

that the government establishes for the executive category in the public service", even though it briefly dealt with the relative salary of a deputy minister accountable to the ministers.

I am prepared to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the opposite is equally true. Public servants' salaries should not be compared arbitrarily and systematically to the salaries of members of parliament. However, you can rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that to raise peremptory, arbitrary and systematic barriers, as proposed in the motion, will result without doubt in a direct and relevant comparison between the duties and responsibilities of the various groups concerned.

Since government activities represent a practical exercise rather than a mere exchange of intellectual ideas, I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gilles) has considered all the real problems that the passage of his motion would entail. As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, there are obviously and quite legitimately some differences in the nature of the activities, working conditions and underlying factors behind the salary rates paid to legislators and public servants. Allow me to look a little more fully into some aspects of civil servants' salaries. To this end, I believe it would be appropriate to take into account two agencies which have allowed successive governments to direct their efforts in order to determine the level of compensation of federal employees. They are the Royal Commission on Government Organization, the so-called Glassco commission, and the Advisory Group on Executive Compensation in the Public Service, most often identified with the name of its current chairman, Mr. Lambert.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to quote a few extracts from the Glassco report which represent in many respects the basis of the administration and compensation policy within the public service for the past 15 years. In Volume I, dealing with the policy of compensation, the commission states in part: "Levels of compensation comparable with those of other employers keep an enterprise financially competitive in the market for skills and talent. They also tend to minimize the risk of losing present employees to more attractive employment elsewhere. At the same time, the philosophies underlying the internal administration of wages and salaries may have a profound influence, for good or bad, upon the employees morale and productivity, and upon his incentive for growth and development. They may emphasize the relation between employee effort and the objectives of the organization, as well as the performance and reward, or they may conceal a link which should, precisely exist."

Mr. Speaker, the Glassco report also states the following: "Although comparability with wage levels outside the public service has been a stated or implied bench-mark for wage determination in the federal public service ever since 1919, it is not possible to make a single, simple generalization about these relations." As far as I know, the commission does not refer to the comparability of wage levels between parliamen-