

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Minister of Finance will move that this item be dropped I will make no objection.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Do I understand that all these names are included?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the whole item.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Then I have a word to say, Mr. Chairman, on the principle involved rather than with regard to any one particular case, as I am not familiar with any of them. I would like to say in passing that I do not think the hon. member for West Calgary (Mr. Bennett) was quite fair in his reference to a married woman receiving a salary and being entitled to a pension, because if I understand it correctly there is a large number of married women in the service at present, and unless there is a general rule laid down to exclude all married women it does not seem to me that that particular criticism applies in this case.

Mr. GUTHRIE: This is where the husband is also in the service.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I am informed that there is a large number whose husbands are also in the service.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Can my hon. friend give specific cases? There is no chance in the world of appointing a married woman under existing conditions.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I have been credibly informed that is the case, if so the Speaker was well within his rights in bringing forward this name. That is not what I object to; it is that in this way we are undermining the principles underlying the Civil Service Commission. The Speaker said that parliament was above all commissions and I think we may take that for granted, but surely that does not settle the matter. I remember that a year ago we had a case of alleged corrupt election practices. The ground then taken was that while undoubtedly parliament historically had the right to deal with such a matter, in the course of years there had developed courts specially clothed with jurisdiction to deal with them, so parliament having delegated its responsibilities to the courts, we should leave the courts to take care of such matters. I suggest that there is a very close analogy between that situation and the one facing us to-day. We have gradually developed the Civil Service Commission, and parliament has divested itself of a certain amount of authority for that particular purpose. Now I submit that if we are going to work on that principle we should not permit

constant exceptions of this kind to be made. It may be all very well to say that the Speaker has acted with the best intentions, of course he has. It is all very well to say that he acted in a chivalrous manner; of course he has, but we cannot deal with matters of this kind merely according to good intentions nor on the basis of chivalry. There must be something more definite. The Speaker stated that there were certain promises made by some individual; surely we cannot proceed on that basis. I urge that we go even further than has been suggested by the Prime Minister and withdraw all the names included in the item in order to permit these appointments to be made as they should be made by the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. ROBB: I beg to move, seconded by Mr. Dunning, that in item 452 all the words after "hereby appointed" down to and including "or amendments thereto" be struck out, and that the item be reduced by \$13,560.

Item agreed to.

Mr. EVANS: Before this vote is passed I would like to direct a question or two to the Speaker of this House. I would like to know if the position of leader of the opposition is a constitutional appointment, and by what right the leader of the Conservative party or of the Liberal party becomes the leader of the opposition, entitled to receive an added salary. Under what parliamentary rule does he get that right? Seeing that there will now be three parties perhaps more evenly balanced in the future than they are to-day, I think some definite rule should be made with regard to this matter. Less than two years ago the present official opposition was a smaller party than the third group in this House. I would like to know by what rule and right this is done?

Mr. YOUNG (Saskatoon): I would like the hon. gentleman to tell me if the group over there considers itself in opposition to the government?

Mr. SPEAKER: In answer to the hon. gentleman, if he will look at the House of Commons Act, Chapter 69, 10-11 George V, he will see the following under section 39:

To the member occupying the recognized position of leader of the opposition in the House of Commons, there shall be payable in addition to his sessional allowance an annual allowance of ten thousand dollars.

Mr. GARDINER: I would like to ask His Honour the Speaker—