

Members' Salaries

● (1530)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I say that with deep admiration for those who stand, and sometimes with a feeling of deep compassion for those who don't. It was his greatest hour. I was very surprised, when he brought up the question about those amendments which were made in the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, that any of our people would argue that those amendments could be made in derogation of every principle of parliamentary government.

I cannot go further than to say that the ruling made by Your Honour adds lustre to the Speakership in this country.

I shall not get applause for saying these things, but there is a day coming. Do not say the people of Canada will forget. To me, it is difficult to understand.

I look over the vote. Everyone is entitled to vote as he pleases. I do not think sufficient attention has been given to those who stood. While I was abroad I endeavoured to find out through the press which members stood against the bill. All I could find was that some 17 members did so. I think honour should be done to those members in my party who took their stand.

I am told there was consultation. Mr. Speaker, they never came near me—they would not take the chance. Never a word! I have been in parliament for 35 years and I love the institution. Not once was any suggestion made to me that the party would take the stand it ultimately did. Every honour should be given to those who opposed this bill, for example, the hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Bawden), the hon. member for Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo (Mr. Beatty), the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt), the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling), the hon. member for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga), the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Friesen), the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies)—one of the greatest economists in the country. I continue: the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave), the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Hnatyshyn), the hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington), the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon), the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro), the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan), the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. O'Sullivan).

Isn't it interesting that the two youngest members of the House should have taken that stand—the members for Hamilton-Wentworth and for Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo? Then there was the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers), and the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary (Mr. Whittaker).

I shall not stop there. I shall refer to others. The hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) showed he had courage; he does not run away from things; when there are difficulties he does not go to Europe; when his party is in difficulties he does not disappear as some did in 1963. Then there were the NDP members—the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas), the hon. member for

Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow), the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltsman), the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Symes). Sir they stood.

Now I go back to 1963 when Mr. Pearson, following the election, decided to get support from the other parties and bring in a measure to increase the indemnity. I have made it clear that I would have no objection to an increase equivalent to the rise in the cost of living—none whatever. But I would stand to the end against back-dating it to election day, months and months before. Just imagine the grab-bag. Thousands of sheckels! How many of you were conscripted? How many of you said there should be an increase in the indemnity? There was not a word said by the Prime Minister of Canada on that subject. Things are worse today than they were then. The first thing I say is this: whatever the increase might be, it should not apply until the next election so that the people might have a word to say regarding it.

Now I shall quote from a statement I made in the House of Commons on July 29, 1963. The person to whom I was referring said:

My position, in a word, is this: I think the indemnities should be increased, and that the salaries of the ministers and of the leader of the government and the allowance to the Leader of the Opposition should be increased. I express myself more freely in this because what I say in regard to the salaries of the ministers, I wish to apply equally to the salary of the Leader of the Opposition. I think that while these increases are justifiable on the merits of the case, they should not take effect during this parliament but should come into effect after a general election, when the country has had an opportunity to return to parliament members in whom it has confidence under the new legislation as passed.

Do you know who said that? It was William Lyon Mackenzie King who, until recent years, was regarded in Liberal circles as worthy of credence and worthy to be followed. He said that on June 29, in the year 1920. I adopt his views. It is nothing new to accept them. They represent a principle which must be accepted. Otherwise, what does it mean? We go through an election. We raise our standard, endeavouring to change the government because of inflation and the failure of the government to act. Then, lo and behold, the negatives of May, June and July become the affirmatives of today. To me, that is difficult to understand.

Naturally people ask: what about yourself? Well, I have never accepted the old age pension because the contribution made by me at the time I became eligible was so out of proportion to the amount I would receive that I refused to take it.

Second, in 1963 I returned over \$12,000, being the amount of the increase which would be in effect until the next election. Because I believe in this institution, I suggest to the members of the government party that they follow the same course, even though the Prime Minister and his cabinet made the recommendation that these vast increases should be given to them.

● (1540)

I do not want to take very much longer; I simply ask,