

directly polluting our waters for 25 years to share voluntarily in the fight against pollution.

The proposed policy is not drastic enough, because it contains only pious recommendations which suggest no new means of scientifically controlling water pollution.

[English]

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### PROVISION OF RESEARCH ASSISTANCE TO LIBERAL MEMBERS

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, in the autumn of 1968 the government made available to the opposition parties in this House sums of money for research purposes to assist them in their vitally important task of analysing and criticizing government legislative measures and offering constructive alternatives. Following discussions with the opposition parties, a sum of \$125,000 per annum was made available to the Progressive Conservative Party and a sum of \$35,000 per annum was provided to each of the other two opposition parties. This money permits the employment of special staff by the House of Commons upon nomination by the several party leaders, and available to them. I am informed that this sum of \$195,000 per year has permitted the opposition parties the use of research offices which now employ some 22 full-time and 5 part-time employees.

• (11:20 a.m.)

[Translation]

I think it fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that this scheme has worked well and has given to the opposition Members of Parliament means to carry on research which have never before been made available. This was but one of several measures which this government has taken to permit the private Member of Parliament to play a more effective role, and in so doing enhance the importance of Parliament as an institution.

As a result of the visible benefits of this new system which, I repeat, has been available only to opposition members, the government has decided to make funds available to private members on this side of the House as well.

A sum of money smaller than that available to all of the opposition parties, \$130,000 as compared with \$195,000, has been allotted for this task, as recognition of the fact that a heavy task of research falls also, on the government supporters.

21611—691

#### Research Assistance to Liberal Members [English]

I am glad to see that all hon. members welcome this announcement, Mr. Speaker. It is another step in the conscious plans of this government to strengthen Parliament and to assist the members who play such a vital role in our democratic processes.

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we all welcome this effort on the part of the government to put its supporters in the House in a better position to enable them to play a full part in the work of Parliament. I do not know what will be the terms of reference of the grant, but I would think that quite possibly one of the major areas of research that private members on the other side of the House would have to undertake would be, at least in the initial stages, not so much research into specific subject matters but into how they can make their views known, how they can get their views across to members of the government.

I simply want to say that not only do I welcome this move to improve the position of the supporters of the government in the House, but if we can be of any assistance to members on the other side of the House in regard to how they may make their views be of more influence in their own ranks, then please, Mr. Speaker, may I convey the message to them not to be reluctant to consult us.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, we are happy to indicate our support for the announcement made this morning by the Prime Minister. I suppose that the first and obvious comment to make about assistance being provided to government backbenchers is: "For heaven's sake, they need it."

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I note that that sentiment is applauded by those on the government side of the House. Seriously, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will recall that when the present deputy leader of this party and I called on him to discuss this matter shortly after the election in 1968 we made this very proposal, namely, that research assistance should be made available to all parties in the House. We repeated that suggestion when the matter was discussed on the floor.

I think it is perfectly correct that if research assistance is going to be made available to those who are not in the cabinet, then