

protest, pensions of Members of Parliament and Senators"? You and I know, Mr. Speaker, how these people will feel, and I just cannot face them on that basis and I am not going to.

I hear somebody snorting. Perhaps it was three snorts that I heard combined into one large snort. I think it is a mistake for Members of Parliament to compare what they are getting with salaries and pensions paid in the business community. If a Member of Parliament feels that in comparison with somebody in the business community his salary and his pension are not what they should be, that his prestige is not what it should be, that his economic status will not allow him to get those things that a person he regards as of comparable ability and advancement in the business community can get, I suggest to that member that he get out of this House and join the business community.

We do not come to this Parliament essentially for the purpose of making a living. Certainly it is not why I came here. Nobody forced any member to come to this House. Hon. members know—at least, I give them credit for knowing—their abilities are such that they could get a better-paid job in private industry if they wanted to. I also give hon. members credit for coming here because they wanted to render public service. Therefore, since people are being told that they must exercise restraint, that they must go easy on any monetary increases, I give these hon. members credit for believing that this is not the time to take advantage of our particular position by putting our hands into the bill and taking out more than a fair amount, an amount that is more than other people can take.

That is the position I am going to take at this time. I realize that each hon. member has to decide this question for himself. Personally, I cannot support these pension increases for Members of Parliament. My people would regard such action as a betrayal of the trust that they have placed in me, the confidence they have that I will put their interests ahead of my own. I cannot do that if I go back and tell them that although I have looked after myself, there is nothing for them. For these reasons I support this amendment which will delete that part of the bill that makes special and different provisions for Members of Parliament and Senators.

Mr. Ray Perrault (Burnaby-Seymour): Mr. Speaker, I have but a short comment to make. We have been told that this matter is one of

conscience. Reforming the pension plan for members in this way has led to expressions of moral anguish on the part of the members of the New Democratic Party.

An hon. Member: Some members.

Mr. Perrault: Some members. The only rider that has not been added is, "Local papers, please copy". I am shocked, bewildered and dismayed that after all these verbal histrionics there has appeared on the Order Paper no proposal by the New Democratic Party to amend the measure before us by introducing a conscientious objector clause that would enable all members of that party to turn back their pension benefits to consolidated revenue if they so desire. There is no proposal on the Order Paper that would permit them to opt out and to back their moral outrage with practical dollar contributions, whether to consolidated revenue, Biafra relief, Canairelief or whatever they want to do with the money.

We have had a great deal of moral indignation but very little follow-through. However, perhaps I am being unfair. Perhaps these members are about to move an amendment from the floor for the purpose of making even greater dramatic impact. Perhaps we can now await an amendment from the New Democratic Party that will deny unto their members any benefits of the pension plan and turn them back to consolidated revenue. We will therefore listen with interest to find out how solidly is this moral anguish backed by performance.

● (3:50 p.m.)

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I must say that when one talks in this House about histrionics, the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) is usually quite capable of giving us a fair demonstration of what that word means. His remarks about amendments, and so on, implied that members of this House are not free to discuss the merits of proposals placed before us from time to time in various government bills. Some of us have proposed amendments in our names which we consider to be appropriate and in accordance with our judgment as members of the House of Commons of the merits of the proposal we have under debate. It is from that point of view I should like to speak for a few minutes on the matter before us.

It should be apparent, despite the allegations of the hon. member for Burnaby-