

—and throughout the country, giving the interests of a political party second place and looking first of all after those of the people.

Mr. Speaker, such is our creed, since it is the one that people have dictated to us. Generally, we are only restating today in the House what people have suggested to us both in our constituencies and in the country at large, particularly the have-nots, whose hardships are the consequence of the current economic situation.

I thank my hon. colleagues for their sympathetic attention and, Mr. Speaker, I hope that, within all parties, the members will consider positively and honestly the suggestions we are putting forward in order that this country's parliamentary and democratic institutions, as well as the function of the member recover their true value, and that the parliamentary institutions and hon. members get closer to the people and thus serve them better.

[*English*]

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this subject because as chairman of the caucus of this party during the period when the Beauré report was under discussion I had perhaps more than an average member's involvement in what was taking place as the Beauré committee worked to assess what should be the salary and expenses of a member. Moreover, I had an opportunity to listen to many of my colleagues—many of them a good deal younger than me, and with young families—discuss the problems of being a Member of Parliament, coming perhaps from a remote constituency in the west or in the Maritimes and living in the city of Ottawa, carrying out parliamentary duties effectively.

When I came first to the House in 1963 I was a member of the committee which at that time looked into the question of the increase in salary which took place in 1963. I remember how much this question involved every member of the House and what a sensitive issue it was to the welfare, the esprit de corps and the working capability of members. The question of salary and expenses was a serious matter to hon. members. So perhaps a little more than members who came here in 1968 for the first time I can look at this question with a philosophical attitude. I think every member knows from his mail and from the way the press often deals with the subject of salaries and expenses that there is much misunderstanding everywhere about the subject. For a short while I want to deal with some of these misunderstandings.

I begin by saying that a member of the Canadian House of Commons is not the best paid parliamentarian in this country, as some people, perhaps even members of the press, believe him to be. I refer to the table which appears at page 59 of the Beauré report, called "Comparative Summary Table of the Annual Salaries and Allowances of Members and Those Holding Certain Leadership Offices in Canadian Provincial Legislatures". When we look at this table we discover that in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec the salaries are the same as ours, \$12,000 in each case, and the tax free allowances are the same, \$6,000 in each case. But we also

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know from the studies which were undertaken when the Beauré committee was active that in addition there are emoluments for committee sittings, for services rendered in ridings and for positions on boards which make the salaries of Ontario and Quebec members much more desirable than ours.

So we may say that in positive terms we are third in Canada in pay and allowances—not first. It is much more desirable, if you live in the province of Quebec or the province of Ontario, from the standpoint of pay and emoluments to be a member of the Legislative Assembly than to be a member of the House of Commons of Canada. This is the fact in respect of the pay scales of members of legislatures in Canada.

When we move to other legislatures, the story is even more remarkable. We see, for instance that in Prince Edward Island for 15 days' work members of the legislature receive a salary of \$2,666 and an allowance of \$1,333. What Member of Parliament would not like to be a member of that legislature? In New Brunswick they receive a salary of \$5,000 and a sessional allowance of \$2,500 for a 32-day sitting. In my own province of British Columbia it is \$5,000 sessional indemnity and \$3,000 plus \$50 a day for 40 consecutive days in 47 days of sittings, making approximately \$10,000 for the 47 days.

• (8:50 p.m.)

A man with an established business in any of these provinces would find it profitable to go into their legislatures. We are really the poor cousins when it comes to pay for legislative work. No one holding a seat in a provincial legislature would want to come here on the basis of pay. That is a fact of life which we must face, and decide whether we want to change it.

The press seems to enjoy saying that a Member of Parliament has a salary of \$18,000, but of course that is not so. They add together the salary of \$12,000 and the expense allowance of \$6,000 and call the total, salary. It implies that a member has no expenses connected with his job and can therefore take the expense allowance into salary. But no member of the press would claim that his own expense account should be lumped with salary.

What personal expenses does a member incur because of his job? If he lives outside the Ottawa area—and that means most members—he must pay two rents. He moves his wife and family back and forth across the country, puts the children in school here and takes them home and instals them in his constituency for the summer and also for the Christmas recess if he can. He pays all his car expenses no matter how much the car is used in the course of his work. He pays for taxis, entertainment, telegrams. If he wants to send a birthday greeting or a message in connection with his work, it is paid out of his own pocket, the only reimbursement being from the non-accountable expense allowance which is so condemned.

Charges for telephone calls made from his own home come out of his pocket, so do secretarial and clerical services in the riding. To get a letter typed or circulated, to buy paper or postage stamps are expenses which come out of the allowance. No account can be rendered for