and a salary unless they again came under the same pension plan. As an example, a former MP who joined the public service could get a pension and a salary while a former member who was later re-elected to Parliament could not get both the MP's salary and the MP's pension at the same time. The idea was then that a career of a member of Parliament and a career of a public service employee are quite distinct, even though they are both paid by the federal government.

Whatever validity this argument may have, it is clear that Canadians today feel that drawing a pension and a salary at the same time from the public purse is unacceptable. They have strong feelings, as the members have said, about MPs' pensions, including the double dipping issue. I agree with them.

Whatever hon. members may feel about some of the media's comments on pensions, I believe the media at this time is truly indicating the views of most Canadians. Let me give some examples of what the media is saying on this matter. The Ottawa *Sun* said in a July editorial: "Today politics is a major league profession with major league bucks, whether it's as an MP, a lobbyist, a senator, or a budding patronage appointee. We don't find many former politicians lining up at food banks or unemployment offices, do we?".

There are some people, I suppose, who might challenge those sentiments. I am not one. It is a widespread opinion in this country and double dipping contributes to the negative image of this House and of members in it. I particularly like the mention of lobbyists in that editorial that I just quoted. I do think that lobbyists might well be subject to the same rules as members of Parliament in their pensions and in their remuneration.

The Vancouver *Sun* said in a March 16 editorial: "Short of lowering taxes, the federal government could not do more to reverse Canadians' surly mood than to slash the pay, perks and pensions of members of Parliament".

I am not sure that pension changes could single handedly turn around the surly mood referred to in the editorial. I am convinced that removing the right to double dip would help. The symbolism of a change in MPs' pensions today is enormous, going beyond many of the arguments about what members earn or what they should earn and things of that type. A change in the double dipping provision and other changes will have great impact in Canada and I support them.

From the St. John's *Evening Telegram*: "Don't count on many MPs saying no to the pension cash cow. Preston Manning's penny pinching Reformers were quickly converted to the spendthrift ways"—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. It is a fine line. The member might be quoting from an article. Maybe I lost sight of that, but let me just take the time to remind members to the extent possible not to refer to members unless of course referring to their riding or other portfolios they may hold within the parliamentary precinct.

Mr. Adams: Mr. Speaker, I do apologize for that. In quoting the St. John's *Evening Telegram* I should have said the leader of the Reform Party's "penny pinching Reformers were quickly converted to the spendthrift ways of their fellow Commons denizens once elected. Meanwhile, the rest of the taxpaying public gets stuck with the bill".

● (1605)

It seems to me that editorial writers are suspicious even of opposition members. This concerns me. This doubt about the interests and purposes of members of Parliament is an important matter for us all. It is something which is very disturbing and which is fundamental to the efficiency of what we do in this House.

I would like to see us move to a pension plan which is fair and equitable, which abolishes double dipping, which sets a clear age at which the pension should be received and which sets an example to other pension plans in the country.

It is my assumption, because it is in the red book, that the Government of Canada is going to do just that.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, while I agree with the member in the areas that he has debated, because they were in the book and they are part of the small agenda of the Liberals in revamping this plan, I would like to know whether the member has any affinity at all for making the plan more fair mathematically, more fair from an actuarial point of view.

Is it fair that a person like myself in my previous position should pay into a pension plan for 27 years to get the same benefit that an MP here can get in about six or seven years? There is an element of unfairness there that I think is perceived by the Canadian people right across this country that the growth rate is much too fast, notwithstanding that we contribute probably a higher percentage than they do. At the same time the growth is way out of line.

I would like to know the member's opinion because he seems to be quite in agreement with the need to revamp the pension scheme.

Mr. Adams: Mr. Speaker, as I said the government is in agreement with the need to revise the pension plan. It is still the government's intention to revise the pension plan.

I would say to the member for Elk Island that he and I got the same number of stars in the advertisement that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* the other day.

I personally believe although I am not an accountant that one of the most serious flaws in the present system is that it is impossible to calculate what the payout will be. Any plan of this