

I should like to say a few things in conclusion. We agree, I believe, that we cannot afford to close out parliamentary life or parliamentary careers to men of modest means. Over the years, the principle followed has been that of attempting to draw a line between what is necessary as adequate compensation for those without private income while at the same time rejecting the principle that parliament shall be made attractive purely as a source of income. I think we have tried successfully to accomplish these objectives in this measure. I do not see any great danger of people running for parliament purely in order to obtain the remuneration and allowances spelled out in this measure. If they did so, I think they would be fooling themselves and I do not think in any such situation they would likely be elected. We do not need to ask the Beaupre Committee to tell us of the definite possibility of some hon. members, who otherwise might have been constrained to withdraw from public life in order to provide adequately for their families and meet their responsibilities, now being able to reconsider. One can only visualize cases of competent and able persons prevented from standing for a parliamentary seat because of financial obligations who will now be able hopefully to make their services available. That, at least, is one of the purposes of the proposed legislation.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Anyone who is a member of this House knows the problems that have to be faced. They are recognized in the Beaupré committee report and in other studies over the years. The government is certainly not going to try to sell the measure to the House. Members will act according to their own personal assessment of the situation in which they and others find themselves.

In looking over the debate in 1954 I came across a statement by the then prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent. When introducing the legislation on that occasion he made the point which the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party made on Monday. He said:

Hon. members will appreciate, however, that these recommendations, which affect all of us in Parliament personally and directly, present an unusual situation. All of us feel reluctance to do for ourselves what we would not hesitate to do for others.

This is a difficult situation and makes the advocacy of this particular bill not the most pleasant task for a minister like myself, who usually has come into the House in support of measures affecting a broad class of people other than Members of Parliament. However, the job has to be done and it has been made clear in all the debates that nobody can take this responsibility except the government. We feel that in this instance, and based on a lot of thought, the move we are making is in the best interests of Parliament and not just the member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso (Mr. MacEachen) or the member for Malpeque (Mr. MacLean) or the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), but Parliament as a whole. It is in that spirit that I believe we ought to consider the measure.

Mr. St. Laurent made this further comment:

However, all of us have a duty to consider first what is advisable in the interest of upholding and strengthening our democra-

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tic parliamentary institutions, and I ask every hon. member on both sides of the House to put aside all personal or partisan considerations and to approach the consideration of this resolution and the consequent legislation in an objective spirit, and deal with it not because of the way in which it may affect him personally, but in the way in which he honestly believes will be in the best interests of our Canadian parliamentary institutions.

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

**Mr. MacEachen:** Later, an amendment was made by the then hon. member for MacLeod that would make the proposal at that time optional. In other words if you wanted to take the salary, there would be a clause in the bill giving you that option. The prime minister of the day refused that amendment because he said the bill had to be considered not on what was the wish of any individual member, on whether he wanted to take it, but that these measures ought to be judged on what was good for the institution of Parliament. That is the spirit in which I am proposing this bill to the House and I hope I have displayed that spirit in making my presentation.

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

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, the motion before the House is for second reading and reference to the Committee on Procedure and Organization of Bill C-242, which deals, among other things, with the question of increasing the pay and allowances of members of Parliament. As the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) has said, this is not a task that any of us look forward to or relish, but nevertheless the responsibility rests with the government to bring in the proposed measure and with Parliament as a whole to determine what its fate will be. This being the case, there is no way that we can avoid our responsibility.

Members of Parliament must therefore look objectively at this problem as it affects this institution and its future, and as it will affect the men and women who will replace those of us who sit in this chamber at the present time. I refer to the young men and women just starting their parliamentary career who would look forward to a considerable number of years in the service of this chamber. It would be easy to cater to the fact that the general public may be lacking in information with regard to the peculiarities of the duties of Members of Parliament. It is therefore a rather thorny nettle that we must grasp but we must grasp it now. I feel that nobody should look upon the sessional allowance of Members of Parliament as a salary for the simple reason that nobody should consider service in this House of Commons as a career that they can choose as young men and look forward to as a way of providing a livelihood in their productive years. Anyone who looks to service in the House of Commons from this selfish point of view, as something that he sets out to do, usually does not get here. Rather he may end up in some university teaching Political Science, but he certainly would not be elected as a Member of Parliament because the very opposite is the case.