

Supply—Legislation

make possible all of it going to the members I spoke of earlier this afternoon and leave the financing of the proposed trip to the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

Mr. Speaker: I have no power to change the purpose of a vote. As the hon. member will see, there is an item of \$20,000 for expenses of committees. That is available for expenditure by committees in the pursuit of their duties.

Mr. Hardie: I am sure that the Speaker is very interested in seeing that the hon. members I have mentioned should have the opportunity to cover their constituencies properly. Although this money is available for committees I would hope that the Speaker would make such a recommendation to the government. I am sure the government would listen to the Speaker. I would hope that the Speaker, as the first member of the house, would recommend to the government that if these moneys now allocated to committees are not going to be used, they should be made available to look after the members for Churchill, Meadow Lake, Peace River, Athabasca, the Yukon, Labrador and the Northwest Territories.

Item agreed to.

186. Estimates of the Sergeant-at-Arms, \$859,599.

Mr. Regier: I have one minor complaint to register under this item having to do with parking space for cars of members of the House of Commons. With the growth in the number of visitors to parliament hill, members of parliament are finding it increasingly difficult to find accommodation for their cars in the spaces allotted to them. An ever-increasing number of cars are using these parking spaces without proper authorization. I hope that the matter can be looked into at the next session. I know that if one arrives at the house a little later than the opening it is very often completely impossible to find a parking space. I have walked along the line of cars and have seen that less than half of them have the proper authorization to park their cars where they are.

Mr. Speaker: I am quite conscious of the difficulty. As a matter of fact, a survey was made by the Sergeant-at-Arms on Saturday last and something like 24 or 30 of the 80 odd spaces available for members, outside of the ministers' parking area, were found to be occupied by cars that were not authorized to park there. There is no policing. I am studying the problem with the Sergeant-at-Arms and the commissioners and we are trying to find a solution so that all members with cars will have their spaces available to them.

However, the solution requires a good deal of co-operation by members as well as policing of the area.

Item agreed to.

189. To provide hereby, notwithstanding anything contained in the Financial Administration Act or the provisions of the Senate and House of Commons Act respecting the independence of parliament, for the payment out of the consolidated revenue fund to each member of the House of Commons appointed by the governor in council to be a parliamentary assistant (which appointment shall not render such member ineligible or disqualify him as a member of the House of Commons) to assist a minister of the crown in such manner and to such extent as the minister may determine and to represent his department in the House of Commons in the absence of the minister therefrom, a salary of four thousand dollars per annum and pro rata for any period less than a year, \$56,000.

Mr. Regier: This vote calls for the payment of parliamentary assistants. I believe the Speaker will agree that it is not wise to ask for more money than can possibly be used in any one financial year. At the end of this month five months of the current fiscal year will have elapsed. The vote calls for \$56,000 representing pay for a full year for 14 parliamentary assistants. We may have had that many but I doubt it. In view of the fact that five months of the current fiscal year will have elapsed at the end of this month, I am wondering whether the Speaker might not like to reduce this amount by making it only seven-twelfths of the amount listed.

Mr. Speaker: As was said earlier, the normal estimate is 14 times \$4,000 or \$56,000. The amount spent has varied a great deal from year to year depending upon how many parliamentary assistants there were and what time they were appointed. The unexpended part of the \$56,000 has ranged from \$4,000 in 1956-57 to \$28,000 in 1945-46. No money is lost by leaving the vote as it is. It just means that it is an over-estimate as it stands.

Mr. Regier: The reason I ask for a reduction is that I believe some members have actually been acting as parliamentary assistants since March 31, if not in an official capacity then possibly in the capacity of expectation. I do not know how to put it.

Mr. Hodgson: Erstwhile.

Mr. Regier: If the vote is left as it is it might lead to parliamentary assistants being appointed and their remuneration being made retroactive. That could cause considerable difficulty. In order to ensure that all parliamentary assistants, once they are appointed, will be treated on an equitable basis, I believe that this amount should be reduced