

Supply

[English]

Are amendments necessary? Yes. Are we going to make changes? Yes. Should MPs be paid less? No. MPs should be paid a decent salary to do the work that is necessary to be done. I do not apologize for working hard for my constituents. They pay me well for it. I work hard for them.

We announced in the book "Creating Opportunity" that we were going to change the plan and we will. Therefore, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "reflects" and by substituting therefor the words:

"the commitment made in the document entitled "Creating Opportunity, the Liberal plan for Canada"".

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I would advise the hon. government whip that I will reserve my decision on the acceptability of his amendment and I will come back to him in a very few minutes.

• (1055)

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I listened in great agony to the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. While I was listening it reminded me of the days when I was a young lad working on a farm in central interior B.C. My job that summer was to clean out the stables. Listening to the hon. member speak, what he was saying bore a huge resemblance to what I was throwing out of the stables that summer.

I want to touch on a couple of points. The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell made a statement that there is no greater honour than to serve the people. He referred to the right hon. prime minister of the past, Mr. Diefenbaker. I would say that there is no greater disgrace in the House of Commons than the MPs' pension plan as it currently stands.

We may serve this House as MPs with the honour of serving the people, but that is counteracted. Any pride we may feel in this House is counteracted by this obscene MPs' pension plan. But this government refuses to change it. It says it is going to do it. When the Prime Minister was in opposition he said he could do it in a day. Now 400 days later we are wondering how long his and his government's days are.

The hon. member who just spoke, and I would like to just put this on record, has been in the House 10 years. If my arithmetic is right, and we will give him the benefit of the doubt, he has probably contributed about \$75,000 to the pension plan, averaging \$7,500 a year. If he retired tomorrow, and let this go on the record for all the people of Canada to see, for a \$75,000 investment he would collect \$2,152,672. Such a deal, such a deal. It is no wonder the Liberals do not want to change the pension plan.

The hon. member also referred to the NCC. He said the Canadian people were vulnerable to malicious, hugely disparaging ads by the NCC that exposed this pension plan. What the Canadian people are most vulnerable to is the constant cash grabs by the government to pay for these things. That is what they are most vulnerable to.

Let us clarify this double dipping phrase once and for all. Obviously the member opposite is very confused about what the Canadian people think about double dipping. That is not surprising. This government has a habit of not listening to the Canadian people. The Canadian people hate double dipping which specifically refers to someone who serves in the House of Commons for six, ten or fifteen years, is paid reasonably well as an MP and then is eligible to collect this gold-plated pension.

They collect the pension. As a matter of fact, the hon. member has been here 10 years and he could collect a pension of \$33,540 a year starting next month. The member retires and of course his Liberal pals are still in government. What happens is he gets appointed to a key government position. Now he gets a salary from the same government he just retired from. He is getting \$33,540 a year in pension and now he is eligible to get whatever in his new job.

That is double dipping. Let us be clear about what Canadians think of double dipping.

• (1100)

I am sure that today is going to be a fun day on this subject. I encourage more comments from the Liberals although they have an indefensible case. I am sure there will be some more rhetoric and more stable waste coming from the other side of the House today before we are through.

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, I will try to be polite with the member in spite of what he has just said. I do not think his questions are horse manure. He has a right to ask whatever he wants no matter how objectionable I privately think his questions are.

I was asked if I contributed approximately \$75,000 in capital to the MPs pension plan. That is probably true. I have no idea. I never counted it. We can phone some place in the comptroller's office and someone can tell us. It could be true.

He would however not take into account interest accumulated on capital. If one added that based on the basic five-year GIC rate, I would suspect that the \$75,000, if it is the proper amount, is probably worth somewhere between \$150,000 to \$200,000 right now. Even invested in a GIC, that amount would generate probably \$15,000 or \$12,000 a year. I do not know what it would generate. That is not the point.