without the sort of amendment I have suggested it will become an election issue in the next election. I do not see it that way, because everyone will know what is involved and the law can be amended. In any event, I suggest that the increase should be postponed until after the next election. If the increase does not become effective until after the next election, I do not see how it will become an issue during the campaign. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) quite properly pointed out when he opened the subject that this might become a danger if we delay the debate. If this measure is passed it will become the law of the land, and then all the candidates will know just what they are going to receive by way of salary.

• (2:20 p.m.)

I take exception to the substantial increase for the reasons I have stated. Many more could be stated. In order to make my position clear, if this substantial increase is granted, I will take steps to have no pecuniary interest in the salary part of this bill. I will return it to the Treasury, if that is mechanically possible, donate it to charity or make a gift to the Crown. I feel that any member who has the temerity to speak against this measure must make that absolutely clear.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nowlan: Members are only fooling themselves if they protest, argue and take exception without following that caveat. As I said earlier, the only thing more odious than preaching the double standard is to accept it. I hope that all members will govern themselves accordingly, and that this matter will be referred to a committee after others have had a chance to express their opinions.

If I decide to run again, I hope the election will be very soon so that I will not divest myself of any interest in this increase for too long. I will stand on any platform anywhere and defend the principle of this bill. There has to be an adjustment. However, because of the rate of unemployment at this time, as well as all the reasons that have been mentioned, we cannot jump our salary by 50 per cent, regardless of the need.

I think that more should be done with regard to expenses. I will not go into details. I would love to have an expense allowance and be able to account to somebody, but that is getting into the details. Whether tax free or taxable, $8,000 is not enough. As far as the salary is concerned, I cannot see any member speaking and voting against the bill, then accepting the fruits of it.

Mr. Tom H. Goode (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan) on the point he made with regard to the double standard. I am pleased to see that the front benches of the New Democratic Party are not empty because I wish to direct a statement to them later in my speech.

Many months ago when the matter of increases in members' salaries was first raised, I made a commitment that I would not vote in favour of any salary increase that would come into effect during the life of this Parliament. I intend to honour that commitment. It was made because, in all conscience, I feel I cannot vote to raise my salary without first seeking a renewed mandate.

This decision was obviously not an easy one to make inasmuch as I agree with the argument put yesterday that the raise is deserved. In fact, I believe it is not overly generous at all, especially in view of the higher recommendation made by the Beaupré commission. However, I feel that some alternate means, clearly free of Parliamentary control, must be found to adjust the rates of remuneration.

I have the greatest respect for those hon. members on both sides of the House who intend to vote for this measure. They are doing what they believe to be right and I know that they will respect my position as one that has been arrived at only after a lengthy period of soul-searching. I emphasize again that it is a personal decision and in no way reflects on any other member of this House.

I now come to the question of the increased expense allowance. There can be no doubt that Members of Parliament have a great range of expenses that are unknown to persons in other walks of life. It is also true that the rising expectations of our constituents for various services to be performed has meant a rapidly escalating cost factor which we must meet. If this bill passes, I will feel compelled, on behalf of my people, to put the larger expense allowance to use for their benefit. However, Mr. Speaker, I repeat my decision that I cannot accept a personal salary increase and I am happy to join the hon. members for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) and Coast Chilcotin (Mr. St. Pierre) in announcing that I intend to either turn back the net increase or donate it to some worthy cause.

I now issue a challenge to the front benches of the New Democratic Party. They have opposed this bill most eloquently. They have condemned this increase as being too great. They have stated that there are others with greater needs. On the other hand, the member for York South (Mr. Lewis) has declared to the press that he plans to accept the raise if the bill passes. Mr. Speaker, I know, this Parliament knows, the people of Canada and the leader of the New Democratic Party know that the bill will pass this House of Commons. I, personally, cannot be hypocritical. In my opinion, if we oppose the increase then we cannot, indeed we must not, use the funds for personal gain. I demand that the member for York South prove to this House, and to the people of this country, that his opposition was not a sham but indeed that he was serious in his declarations to the House; that his protests were founded in something deeper than an attempt to secure television coverage and a pat on the back from the editorial writers of this country. I ask him to prove that he is sincere. I challenge him to join with the members for Surrey-White Rock and Coast Chilcotin and myself in dedicating this raise to the less fortunate in Canada.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member who just spoke made a general reference to the front benches of this party. I am pretty sure that what he said was in