

*Member's Salaries*

be brought back to us again in proper form. I hope no one in the Cabinet will stand up and suggest he will correct it right now. I know these things are technicalities but it is part of our system that the Crown and the Governor General in this country have certain prerogatives and rights, but the Governor General has submitted this and somebody may have made a mistake somewhere along the line, probably not His Excellency in a personal way, but a mistake has been made.

Let me remind Your Honour that it is not many days ago we were asked to pass a supply bill in this House, which still has not passed the other place. The objection was that there had been something proposed for which there was questionable if any authority. I would remind Your Honour that you are also wrestling with another point of order having to do with one of the taxation bills.

If there is a point to be raised that there must be conformity between a Governor General's recommendation and the bill based thereon, I suggest it applies in this case. It will not hurt this House one bit if this bill's introduction is delayed 24 hours.

**An hon. Member:** Twenty-four years.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Longer, as far as I am concerned. I suggest precisely because we are dealing with a bill that affects ourselves, a bill upon which the eyes of the country are focused, we should not violate, or appear to violate, or ride roughshod over the rules in any way.

My point of order is that you should rule, and I hope I have persuaded you that I knew what I was talking about, even though I have not seen the bill, that this recommendation of the Governor General is defective and should be sent back. If the government wants to introduce it again tomorrow that would be for the government to decide.

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this recommendation is to establish the upper limit of the expenditures, that is \$6,000. It cannot amend the existing statutes of parliament. Quite obviously and clearly a clerical error has been made. I agree with the hon. member that he would like to debate this bill for a long time. I have no objection to that, but I do believe that technicalities like this should not be permitted to interfere with the proper discussion of this matter.

**Mr. Speaker:** If there are no other hon. members who want to make a contribution to this very interesting point perhaps I might comment. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has raised, as always, a very interesting and, I might also say, a very well informed and documented argument. However, I have some difficulty with this point, as he and other hon. members would readily understand and appreciate.

● (1440)

The recommendation itself is a necessary step or prior condition precedent to the introduction of this kind of bill. If there are substantive differences between the recommendation and the bill or if there are other kinds of difficulties in the bill which might test the authority of the government to introduce it, they may become evident

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

when the bill is given first reading and distributed so that hon. members can scrutinize it. However, the purpose of first reading is clear; that is, to see to it that any bill may be introduced, printed and distributed so as to give hon. members an opportunity to study it. There are procedures under which that process can be stopped and can be voted against if necessary, and I think hon. members are familiar with it. However, the fact that that occurs only in the most extreme and rare circumstances is an indication that, regardless of the content of any legislation, no matter how controversial it may be, it is the undoubted right of any hon. member, whether he be a government member or a private member of the House, to at least put in the form of a bill his views and opinions before the House. It is also his right to have the bill printed and distributed in order to ensure that all hon. members will have an opportunity to examine and study it, and therefore discuss it in an intelligent way. That process should not be stopped except on the clearest possible grounds.

The grounds put forward by the hon. member are interesting, clear, and easy to understand. They are that the lower limit is in error in the Governor General's recommendation in so far as expense allowances to senators is concerned. There can be no doubt that if the upper limit were in any way in question in terms of the bill, that would be a different story. In any event, since it is only the lower limit which is in error, and certainly if the bill sought to amend or change the lower limit, there would be considerable procedural difficulty, that may be in the nature of the bill. It seems to me that the scales ought to be tipped in favour of the introduction of the bill which in no way supports it in principle but causes it to be introduced, printed and distributed so that hon. members will have it in their possession for study. Certainly if it were another stage of the bill, it would be a different matter, but at this stage of the bill, unless the grounds are absolutely clear, the process of first reading, printing and distribution should not be interfered with. Therefore, I should ask the House whether the minister has leave at this time to introduce the bill.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** No.

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council)** moved the first reading of Bill C-44, to amend the Senate and House of Commons Act, the Salaries Act and the Parliamentary Secretaries Act.

Motion agreed to, on division, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

**Mr. John M. Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 16, 67, 94, 100, 102, 103, 258, 304, 342, 374, 415, 643, 650, 658, 663, 676, 684, 721, 807,