

filibustering, that three Liberal members, two from the New Democratic Party and one from the Progressive Conservative Party have already spoken while only one representative from our group contributed to the debate. I believe the hon. member for Cochrane should address himself also to the Progressive Conservative and the NDP members because some of them will surely express opinions contrary to his own. He was right in inviting us to share his opinion but we are absolutely free and still under a democratic government.

I agree to describe the facts before voting. I am keeping to the priorities I promised our citizens I would always defend.

That is why I warn the government that I will not be able to vote in favour of Bill C-242 until it accepts the three following priorities: First, the adjustment of family allowances in keeping with the increase in the cost of living while maintaining their universality; second, the immediate increase of the basic federal income tax exemption to \$5,000 for married couples and to \$3,000 for unmarried people; and, third, the establishment of secretarial facilities in Roberval county to provide adequate services there.

If we are legislators we are also elected representatives of our ridings and above all social workers for all those who require our services.

Of course, this work requires dedication but also money. That is why I claim that it is incumbent upon the government to supply us with the facilities needed for our work.

We have been asking for such services for almost nine years and we have never been able to get them.

And yet the province of Quebec has set an example for Ottawa in this regard while Ottawa is getting much more taxes from our citizens.

For a long time we have also been asking that the government take over the car expenses incurred when we travel in our constituencies and, here again, we only got promises. Several members told me: Well, thanks to that increase you will now be able to set up an office in your constituency. This office already exists but it keeps going with my own money.

That increase will almost be brought to nothing because of the double taxation. Indeed, on the taxable \$6,000 I will have to pay \$3,000 in income tax alone. And if I take the balance to pay a salary to a young man, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Gray) will again take \$1,200 from this young worker. This shows us that the increase will have the effect of increasing the receipts of the federal treasury by \$4,200 while only \$1,800 will be left to me to render some services to my fellow-citizens. That approach is typical of the government. That is its way of getting taxes. It seems to promise an elephant, and delivers a mouse. But it is the taxpayers who foot the bill.

I cannot therefore go along with this hypocritical game because I have always been loyal to my constituents. As soon as these three priorities have been accepted, I will

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be prepared to consider new increases in parliamentary allowances.

I am amazed when I realize that the government, after eight years, suggests such an increase. I think that it would have been much more logical to adjust members of Parliament allowances every year, as they do in the industry or elsewhere, taking into account the rise in the cost of living. But it seems that the government can never be as logical as others. Surely our expenses have increased in the last eight years, like those of other citizens, and I get a good laugh when I see a labour leader like Mr. LaBerge being shocked at that increase. I will say to Mr. LaBerge, that if he wants to be honest with himself for a change he should sit down with ten of his members and figure out what the increases in salary and expenses have been in the last eight years. He will not even dare open his mouth after that, I am sure.

It is not that I am not aware of the need for an adjustment, but it is a matter of principle and loyalty to my electors. In reply to those who claim that members take it easy today, I invite them, as I did last year, to follow me around just for one week. I maintain that few workers put in as many hours per week.

As for me, my week starts at 4 a.m. Monday, when I leave home, Mistassini, for Ottawa. I drive 500 miles to get here for the opening of the sitting at 2 p.m. and sit until 10.30 in the evening.

From Tuesday to Friday each week, I am on the Hill from 8.30 in the morning till 10.30 sometimes 11 at night, except on Wednesday when I leave at 6 and on Fridays when I leave Ottawa at 5 p.m. to reach my riding at one o'clock the next morning. On Saturdays I must be in my office at 8 o'clock and stay there until very late. On Sundays, when there are no receptions or meetings in municipalities, I receive my constituents in the office and finally I must be on my way at 4 in the morning to travel the 500 miles.

I apologize for having given all those details, but Canadian people must know the truth about members of Parliament. Certainly reporters will not tell them for us. Some may say that not all Members of Parliament work that hard!

With nine years' experience, Mr. Speaker, I do not dare pass judgment on anybody anymore because I know I will be 95 per cent wrong. Being better acquainted with my colleagues, the members of the Ralliement créditiste, with whom I have the pleasure of working, I can vouch that all of them give the best of themselves. And our only reason for being in Parliament is the fight for our principles and the loyalty which we must show to those who have elected us. And it is precisely because of these principles and this loyalty that we cannot accept Bill C-242 as drafted, mainly because of its Part II, concerning the increase for senators.

As I have already said and repeated in this House, I am absolutely against an increase in salary for senators; I am simply in favour of abolishing the Senate so that those who are actually governing the country may have more space.