

*Supply—Legislation*

space we have. All of us must realize that we are cramped in this building and even the members have to put up with restricted quarters as do the press in their operations until some solution is found to that problem.

**Mr. Regier:** On vote 185 I should like to call one little matter to the attention of the Speaker, if I may. It is normal practice, as the Speaker well knows, for the average worker in Canada to look forward to working not more than a five-day week. There are many employees in the House of Commons who, when the house is sitting six days a week, are requested to work six days a week. While I realize that at times it might be advisable for the house to be meeting six days a week, I would imagine that most members of the House of Commons would be able so to arrange their work that as few of the employees as possible would have to work six days a week. The ones I have in mind are our office help. We have a lot of research work to do, and so on, and I think we could well arrange to be doing this on Saturdays and Sundays. I believe arrangements could be made whereby members would not need the help of their stenographers except possibly the odd one down in the pool for emergency purposes. I think those people would greatly appreciate that. As we all know, when the summer months come many residents of Ottawa move out of the city and live out in the various summer cottages. They have made arrangements as to how to get in and out of Ottawa on regular week days. However, when we impose upon them the added Saturday, it just imposes a considerable hardship on a goodly number in that they are suddenly faced with this rather serious transportation problem. I was wondering also whether the Speaker had given any consideration to exempting those employees from work on the ordinarily accepted statutory holidays such as July 1, Her Majesty's birthday, and so on?

**Mr. Speaker:** Within the time at my disposal since being elected Speaker, and there has not been very much of it, I have been trying to familiarize myself with the conditions of work of both permanent and sessional employees. As I understand our system, in 1955 we did adopt the five-day principle, and everyone working here works on the basis of a five-day week. Now it is true in fact that they work six days while we are working six days, but they are paid additional for the extra day, and I am not sure that that is not a welcomed extra pay. When we are not in session, the employees of the House of Commons do enjoy some privileges which other civil servants and

[Mr. Speaker.]

employees of public and municipal authorities do not enjoy, such as earlier closing hours. The extra time in which they work on Saturday and statutory holidays is made up to them as a holiday with pay in the case of the permanent staff. That may not be the answer; I do not think it is but, in any event, we are trying now to compensate all of our staff on the basis of a five-day week, giving them either the equivalent time off with pay or paying them for the extra work when they are sessional employees.

I do appreciate the hon. member's suggestion that members of the house should co-operate as much as they can to alleviate the situation which exists in the holiday period, and the hot weather, which necessarily arises out of our sitting at this time.

**Mr. Fisher:** In connection with the salaries for parliamentary assistants, I notice that the allotment has been doubled. I wonder what the explanation is. If parliamentary assistants should be appointed, will they be given a grant for the whole year, or will it be on the pro rata basis for the amount of time they actually put in in the year?

**Mr. Speaker:** I can only answer that nothing is being paid now under that vote.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I confess I was greatly puzzled to see that the vote indicated for last year in the estimates was \$28,000, and this year it is \$56,000. It seems to me there must be some technical explanation for this because obviously the provision was made for 14 appointments originally, and I do not think it has ever been changed. If my arithmetic is correct, 14 times 4 would be 56 and not 28. I notice the same thing with regard to the allowance given to the incumbent of the chair at the moment, which I am sure was \$2,000 in times past but this says \$1,000 for 1957-58. I am sure there is some technical explanation of it, and I wondered what it was.

**Mr. Speaker:** The normal vote is 14 times \$4,000. I cannot give offhand any explanation for the estimates of last year which, of course, are not now under consideration, but I will be glad to obtain the information.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I am reluctant to think, sir, that the Minister of Finance has made another mistake in arithmetic.

**Mr. Hardie:** It has been rumoured around the corridors that out of the estimates of the Speaker there is a possibility of a trip into my own constituency of Mackenzie River and into the Yukon Territory this session. I am wondering whether the Speaker, rather than spend this money on a trip for hon. members, could not divert some of this or