

take a hypocritical stand, and they do not mind it. Because they look after the poor people, inasmuch as this gets them votes. They do not have any other use for them.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) urges that we refer Bill C-44 to committee, where New Democrat members may propose in amendment everything they care for. This is not asking for the impossible. In their amendment, they propose a six-month hoist.

● (1620)

The funniest thing about it is that I am convinced that they are all eager to get their raise. They are reluctant to say so. They know that members of Parliament are no millionaires. There may be some millionaires in private enterprise, but one does not become a millionaire on a parliamentary salary, that's for sure.

Mr. Speaker, a Liberal candidate in my constituency—the NDP members are not the only ones to object to salary raises—said recently on television that he was dead set against a raise for MPs. He had sent a telegram to the Prime Minister, his leader—

**An hon. Member:** He was defeated.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Yes, he was defeated, and I am the one who did it. He sent a telegram to the Prime Minister who certainly received it. I think he did not act upon it, that he did not reply to his candidate. I say those things to show the inconsistency and the inconsequence of such people.

I was talking recently to a minister, the one who presides at the conventions where he is chosen as candidate. I have made him lose his deposit twice already, and he still comes back.

Recently, I spoke to the Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey). I told him: Your candidate in my constituency is against a salary increase. He said: "Oh, it is not serious, it is only because he was not elected. Had he been elected, he would have been for the increase, like all the others." This is the answer of the Postmaster General, who presides at the Liberal convention in his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, it all depends on whether the increase is to your advantage or not. Some are afraid to take position because they are afraid to be criticized.

Yesterday, I said that the press in general was responsible for criticism among the population because the people have not been told the truth. They have not been told in detail what the increase provided by Bill C-44 entails. Yesterday, I talked about the constituency of Villeneuve; in my constituency, I also made an investigation and 90 per cent of the people replied: "Of course, we do not object to paying you adequately, because you give us the services that we expect."

Mr. Speaker, I am not afraid to support Bill C-44. I said yesterday and I repeat today that some people get more money than the members of Parliament and, if they do not get what they want, they even go on strike. People who earn \$40,000, \$35,000 or \$30,000 a year go on strike to get salary increases and the New Democrats are the first to stand up and defend those people by asking the government to give in and accept the increases or indexations requested. Mr. Speaker, we are not opposed to civil ser-

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vants getting an adequate salary. However, I object, and my colleagues also object to people, like the New Democrats, trying to rouse the population against the members of Parliament simply to attract votes during the next election. They did the same thing before the election of July 8 and, just before the election, I had told the then leader in the House—I was sitting on the other side at the time: Because of your attitude, half of your members will be returned on July 8, and you will not be one of them. On election night, he was the one who was not returned and about half the members of the New Democratic Party were reelected. Why? Because they tried cunning tricks and told the government: You will do as we tell you or you will be defeated. When people are in a minority, when they have the balance of power, those things are possible. I told them: You now have a strength you may never have again in your life. I say it again today. If they want to play politics with that, Mr. Speaker, they are 16, after the next election, in two, three, four or five years, half of their present number of members, not more than eight, will be reelected.

Mr. Speaker, electors are fed up with being told stories by people who cannot be more serious than they have been this afternoon. We hear them talk, they sound like offended virgins. I say they are not offended virgins, but whited sepulchres, in the eyes of public opinion. If they vote against Bill C-44, that is their business, but if they do so for purely political, electoral purposes, I say they are not serious, and if they are not first honest with themselves, they are not honest with Parliament, with the people of Canada. If there are poor people in Canada, let us work to help them. It is not by begging or by being without money that we will improve the lot of the Canadian people. Hon. Members should not spend two weeks studying this bill, for they must keep on working in the best interests of the Canadian people.

[English]

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, may I begin by saying to the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) that if we oppose this bill, as the majority of the members of this party do, we are not taking that position in expectation of any political gain being made by our opposition.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh!

● (1630)

**Mr. Orlikow:** I have never believed that the hullabaloo about this issue created by the press reflected a tremendous interest on the part of thousands of Canadians. The number of letters I received in my office and the number of telephone calls to my home and my constituency office did not total more than two dozen altogether. I have had more letters and communications on other issues than I have on this one. Therefore, I do not believe the public is very excited about this question. I sent a questionnaire to every household in my constituency last January, and according to the replies that came back, substantially more than 50 per cent of the people receiving the questionnaire—which included a question on MPs salaries—indicated they supported an increase in the indemnities paid to members of parliament.