

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

would necessitate a joint federal-provincial program; and this is not what we have here. This is a program designed to provide job opportunities in areas of high chronic unemployment, in the discharge of what has been accepted as a primarily federal government responsibility, namely unemployment. The program, and the criteria, are consequently related to this problem.

The program is not concerned with simply statistical averages of registered unemployed. Account is taken not only of the numbers who are registered as unemployed in a manpower service area, but also of the unregistered unemployed. The best instrument we have for measuring this is to take the average non-farm family income as disclosed by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and to assume that a family with a very low average annual income must of necessity, contain unemployed people, whether registered or not. With regard to areas having a widespread low non-farm family income, even though there may be very few unemployed registered there it is safe to assume that there are a number of people who are either fully unemployed or underemployed. Consequently, a level has been established for average non-farm family income and where the average is below this, the area is designated. Where the average is above this, the area does not on this account qualify for designation.

• (10:10 p.m.)

In addition we have a further qualification that in areas where there is a higher than average rate of unemployment but the rate of growth of the labour force has been very rapid, such unemployment is merely a question of catching up. The growth which is continuing has been overtaken by the influx of new workers, and consequently there is current unemployment. But because the employment opportunities are growing, this is not likely to be a chronic condition. So in areas where there is unemployment registered above a certain level, in fact 200 per cent of the national level, there is designation. In areas of lower registered unemployment, 150 per cent of the national level, and the rate of employment growth is less than two-thirds of the national average, this will qualify for designation. Again I will mention that where the non-farm family income is below a certain level—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I must advise the minister that the time allotted to him has expired.

[Mr. Drury.]

PUBLIC SERVICE—LEGISLATION TO INCREASE PENSIONS OF RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 2, as reported in *Hansard* at page 1081, I put this question to the Prime Minister:

Can we be assured that the government's legislation implementing the recommendation of the special joint committee on the public service of Canada for increases in the pensions of retired civil servants will be presented to the house before we break for a summer recess?

The Prime Minister's reply was as follows:

I am afraid I cannot give my hon. friend that assurance. We will do our best if progress on other matters in the house is sufficiently encouraging.

I want to say that at this stage that reply is totally unsatisfactory.

I see that the answer to my question tonight is to be given by my genial friend, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of National Revenue. It is difficult to quarrel with him, but I want him to tell the government that I am as close to the point of anger over this issue as I have ever been over anything since I have been in the House of Commons. There is not enough time to tell the story of the battles that some of us have put up for our retired civil servants for more than 20 years, but I will take a moment to recite a few facts regarding the last 12 months.

In June of 1966, a year ago, we finally got the agreement of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Benson) that so far as he was concerned the question of the pensions of retired civil servants could be referred to the special joint committee on the public service of Canada. The only condition he attached was that we must first of all deal with the other legislation before us. We dealt with that other legislation but we kept this question alive. Finally, in January of 1967 the government agreed to refer the matter to the committee. That agreement was expressed in a motion which enlarged the terms of reference of the special joint committee and gave us the authority to deal with this question. According to the report that our committee made on May 8, 1967, we held eight meetings during which we dealt with this issue, and we heard the evidence of 21 witnesses. Our report indicates the various organizations that these witnesses represented.

The result was a unanimous recommendation from the committee which was presented to parliament on Monday, May 8, 1967, recommending that there be increases in the