

Oral Questions

bill to committee so that some improvements might be made before we proceed with it?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, the government attaches a high priority to this bill. It will be called in the orderly process of events.

Mr. Lundrigan: On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will recognize the hon. member in a moment. The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond wishes to rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for raising this question of privilege. I have exhausted every possible means to find an answer. My question of privilege involves the integrity of the House and the welfare of the Cape Breton miners. I may say that the former Minister of Regional Economic Expansion and I were beginning to find a way in the maze of problems. The present minister is doing likewise. A question of legality arises. It is the question of legality that is the basis of this question of privilege, since I want consideration given to the recent federal court case. I wish to ask the President of the Treasury Board if Treasury Board can authorize the compulsory retirement of any person prior to the normal retirement age of 65.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member may wish to ask the question of the minister. Perhaps the minister wishes to give a legal opinion or reply in some way to the hon. member. However, that matter certainly cannot be raised by way of a question of privilege. I appreciate how important the matter is, particularly to the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond, but I do not think that our Standing Orders and practice make it possible to seek information, relevant and important though it may be, under the heading of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I ask the guidance of the House or anyone in the House who can give me an answer. With regard to the good legislation that was passed in this House in June, 1967, how does the government make this work?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): I ask the guidance of any member of this House who can give it to me.

Mr. Speaker: I understand very well the matter being raised by the hon. member. It has been raised from time to time in the House. It has been considered in committee. There is an awareness of the situation on the part of a number of hon. members. Again, I doubt whether the difficulty can be solved, or the problem settled, either on a point of order or a question of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a further point of order. I do not wish to continue arguing this point. I want to get rid of it. How do I get a legal opinion when I seek it from the Crown? Who will give me that legal opinion? If the Federal Court of
[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

Canada withdrew this authority from treasury, how can it be applied to the miners in Cape Breton?

• (1520)

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day. I apologize to the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate. He wishes to raise a point of order. I recognized first the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond. He was entitled to priority for his question of privilege.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, I hope I am in order in asking the government House leader if he can give us some indication of the position in the government's structure of priorities of the Family Income Security Plan which was alluded to in the Speech from the Throne and about which I am sure many members are getting hundreds of inquiries. Is the government planning to bring in this bill?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, the government is definitely planning to bring in this bill. I am not certain I can assure my hon. friend that it will be brought in shortly. I do not expect it will be brought in in the early part of the session.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT (No. 1)****PROVISION FOR APPROPRIATION TO BE DEEMED
ADVANCE**

The House resumed from Wednesday, January 24, consideration of the motion of Mr. Andras that Bill C-124, to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971 (No 1), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Baldwin (page 620).

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Caouette) wish to complete the remarks he began yesterday?

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, to follow up yesterday's remarks, I must say that I quite appreciated the speech of the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who spoke before me.

I said I was astonished by the government about-face but I gradually learned that this is common policy for Liberal and Progressive Conservative members. The hon. member clearly illustrated the whims of the old parties.

But despite the accusations and the comments made on the bill under debate, I cannot find in this legislation any corrective to the problems posed by the Unemployment Insurance Act. As I said yesterday, this is only a cover for the incompetence of the minister and of his department.

They prefer delaying and perpetuating the farce by introducing new legislation such as Bill C-125.