

Pensions

Mr. Hellyer: I so move, Mr. Chairman.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 58 as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 59 to 72 inclusive, agreed to.

● (8:40 p.m.)

On clause 73—*Regulations respecting leave of absence.*

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of National Defence will be moving the following amendment:

Immediately after line 27 on page 59, insert the following paragraph:

"(bc) prescribing the period within which and the procedure by which any person dissatisfied by any decision or direction made by the minister under section 13 or subsection (3) of section 16 may appeal that decision or direction to the Treasury Board and authorizing the Treasury Board to make any decision or direction in relation thereto that might have been made by the minister under those provisions;"

Mr. Hellyer: I so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 74 to 88 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 89—*Contributions by employees.*

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, clause 89 is one of two or three clauses which deal with the pensions of members of the Intercolonial and Prince Edward Island Railways Employees Provident Fund. This of course is in line with other cases of integration which are being effected. I rise merely to say what I said in the joint committee, that this reference to railway workers prompts me to remind the government that along with the need to do something for retired civil servants whose pensions are inadequate, something also will have to be done for retired employees of the Canadian National Railways.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Chairman, if I may, I should like to re-emphasize the remarks made by the last speaker. Many of the retired pensioners live in the Halifax riding and their plight indeed does deserve action.

Clauses 90 to 94 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 1—*Short title.*

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, although there are a number of subjects concerning which I think action still is needed and concerning which we might continue to speak on this clause, I wish to raise at this point only one. I refer to the representations which have been made to the government for a

[Mr. Benson.]

change in the formula under which the pensions of widows of civil servants are calculated. We had some discussion on this matter in the special joint committee, due to the fact that this was drawn to our attention by some of the delegations which appeared before us.

During the proceedings of the committee I made reference to a copy of a letter which I now have before me, written by the Minister of Finance to Mr. Fred W. Whitehouse, National Secretary-Treasurer of the Federal Superannuates National Association. This letter from the Minister of Finance was written on May 25, 1966. I think, since it contains only three paragraphs, I might be permitted to read it:

Dear Mr. Whitehouse:

I have received your letter of May 13, 1966 concerning the question of the upward adjustment in the pensions of retired civil servants and their widows.

I am familiar with the earlier correspondence on this subject which you have had with my predecessor in office and also with the Prime Minister. This matter has been considered by the government on a number of occasions and I must advise you that I have nothing to add at this time to what the Prime Minister said on April 28 in the House of Commons as printed in *Hansard*, page 4424, of that date.

If I may interrupt myself before I quote the third paragraph, I should like to emphasize the obvious. This correspondence relates to two subjects; one, raising the pensions of civil servants already retired and, two, changing the formula under which the pensions of widows are calculated.

In the paragraph which I have just quoted it is clear that the Minister of Finance said to Mr. Whitehouse that he has nothing more to say on the question of raising the pensions of civil servants already retired. I regret that that is the position of the government. I do not intend to let it stand as it is, but at the moment that is it. But, Mr. Chairman, when we come to the final paragraph of this letter we have something in a different vein, regarding the question of changing the formula under which the pensions of widows are calculated. Let me read this final paragraph. I ask the minister to listen to it, and to note the contrast between this paragraph and the one which I just read, which said in effect: nothing doing, on increases of pensions of persons already retired. I now read the third paragraph:

The other question of an increase in the basic formula for the benefits payable to widows of former civil servants under the Public Service Superannuation Act is one which has been considered in the over-all picture of contributions and