

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Mr. Bell (Carleton): Speaking for myself, I have tried every technique known either to an advocate or to a parliamentarian. I have tried coaxing, cajoling, persuading, becoming indignant and angry—as I did the last time this matter was discussed—but all moods have been without avail. I put it to the parliamentary secretary, could he not convey the message to cabinet that the time has come for a decision? There is no more time for stalling or contempt. While the decision is pending some people are suffering.

Mr. Knowles: Dying.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): As the hon. gentleman says, some persons are dying. Many, many retired public servants who would have been entitled to benefit from the recommendation have died since May 8, without receiving the benefits that the unanimous committee recommendation said they ought to receive. I know that the hon. gentleman for York Centre (Mr. Walker) concurred in the unanimous recommendation of the committee. Retired public servants have died, and others have suffered. I ask the hon. gentleman, and tonight I am being as reasonable as I possibly can be, can he not, from his vantage point on the government side, bring some influence to bear on the ministers? Can he not influence the Minister of Public Works (Mr. McIlraith) and ask him to go to the cabinet tomorrow morning and say, "We will do something; we will decide this matter one way or the other"? That is all I ask, and it is a simple request. I hope that the request will not be denied by the hon. gentleman who represents Ottawa West and who has more influence, Mr. Speaker, than you or I have on any particular topic within the jurisdiction of cabinet. I am sure that if my hon. friend from York Centre goes to his colleague for Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) and puts the request in the mild terms I am trying to put it in this evening, we shall have some decision soon.

Sir, this is a desperately serious matter for many persons in this country. Let the government stop stalling and decide something.

Mr. Knowles: Hear, hear.

Mr. J. E. Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I am very impressed by the hon. member's presentation. Frankly I find it easier to answer him when he is in his normal wild

and rambunctious mood than when he is in the suppliant mood he has displayed tonight.

I do not criticize the hon. member for Carleton or the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I do not criticize them for their deep concern and for their eagerness to have the government decide on this most important matter. I do ask them to give government members who served on that committee, my minister and the government some credit for concern. I ask them to give my minister, I ask them to give the government, some credit for concern and eagerness to do something to make a decision and to make that decision as quickly as possible on this whole question of the superannuation fund. I should like to point this out, in case the public feel that parliament and the government are not aware of this problem.

On Monday, November 20, just two days ago, this question was raised in the house by the hon. member for Carleton. The Prime Minister at that time said the matter was still under consideration. I draw attention to this because I do not want the inference to be drawn from the continuous representations which are being made in the house that the government has decided to do nothing, to shelve the project and delay rather than say yes or no.

On November 9 the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) asked this same question, as reported at page 4118 of *Hansard*, and the minister gave an honest, truthful reply at that time, pointing out that this question was on the cabinet agenda and that the minister himself was looking forward to having it dealt with as quickly as possible. I go back to September 26, when again the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre brought this matter to the attention of parliament as reported at page 2534. I have been trying to look up two other references—occasions upon which this question has been raised and when I personally have replied on behalf of the minister.

I can say nothing further than has already been said by the Prime Minister and by the minister on this question, but I will undertake to clip out from tomorrow's *Hansard* the most eloquent remarks of the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Bell) and bring them to the personal attention of my minister.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.30 p.m.