

complete lack of confidence in the government, would he inform the house why he and his party have so frequently sustained the government by their votes during the last two years?

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre that many times we have moved motions of non-confidence in the government which would have been passed had it not been for the absenteeism of members of the official opposition.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all of us in the house would want to welcome the hon. gentleman who has just spoken back to his seat, particularly when he knows now that his leadership has been confirmed. However, some of us were a little mystified by the conclave which took the hon. gentleman away from the house. We know now that he is the leader of the reactionary group in his party and that the forces of liberalism which sought to assert themselves at the convention were regrettably unsuccessful.

Mr. Knowles: Now we know why the external affairs of our country are in such a mess.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): My hon. friend drew a picture of the government leaving business unattended. That reminds me of what I saw on page 7 of the *Globe and Mail* this morning indicating that the N.D.P. convention broke up without dealing with the resolution on a guaranteed annual income.

Under the rules of the house it is not possible to challenge the sincerity of an hon. member, and I certainly would not challenge the sincerity of my hon. friend when he says that we must not adjourn today unless this very important matter is dealt with. My hon. friend, however, should not seek to convince any of us that he is really serious in that proposal. I suggest there is no one who would be more disappointed if we did not adjourn today than my hon. friend who, after his leadership race at the convention, is now looking forward with justification to a well earned rest.

The Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Benson) has dealt with this matter. He is the minister in charge of it. Yesterday he replied to the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Bell) and pointed out the government's intention with regard to retroactivity. He has recognized, as has the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) on a number of occasions, the concern

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and the interest of the government in this problem. As my hon. friend knows, this matter was considered very carefully by a joint committee of the house in the last session of parliament. No less than eight meetings were held at which evidence was received from 21 witnesses. A report was filed by that committee late this spring. It contained certain recommendations which are now before the government.

In the light of what the Minister of National Revenue said yesterday, it is not fair for my hon. friend to make the suggestion that he made a few moments ago. No government in this country has done more by way of old age retirement plans for civil servants and others than has the government represented by the party which sits to Mr. Speaker's right.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Whom does the minister have in mind, Judge Landreville?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): It is not a fair argument to suggest callousness on this side because we have all agreed on a program of adjournment. It is not fair to suggest that because the government is a participant in the adjournment proposal it is callous and uninterested in the economic stress which faces a section of the population of our country. The government is considering the report and it will give it the consideration which has been urged on it by the committee which gave the matter such thorough study. We on this side of the house are as concerned about the plight of retired civil servants as is my hon. friend or anyone else in the house.

In conclusion I want to say that I speak with friendship and affection for my hon. friend. As the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Cameron) said, my hon. friend has been busy. He has been too busy to follow what has been going on in the house. I am sure we all understand that because many others have preoccupations. My hon. friend has not been allowed the opportunity of knowing what we have been doing here because, as the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands said in Toronto on Thursday, my hon. friend has been preoccupied.

• (12:20 p.m.)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am one of those who greatly admire the ingenuity of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin). He can produce a smokescreen at