

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

to a speech that is being made. It will record the number of supporters in a member's party who are listening to him, and the number of people in the House generally.

If a member is making a very logical plea on behalf of the taxpayers he represents, and he finds that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) is chatting away in the back row and not listening to him, on occasion that may be all right; but if this shows up on television, one quick picture will discredit the whole worth and logic of his argument. I would dwell on other differences between television and *Hansard* if time permitted, but may I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

SOCIAL SECURITY—INQUIRY AS TO TABLING OF WHITE PAPER

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in view of the debate that we have just had, I suppose it is appropriate to remark that we have now reached the time of the late show, for those who are still up and still able to see what there is to see and decide whether or not to believe it. My subject for tonight's late show arises from a question that I asked on Thursday, December 18, as indicated in *Hansard* at page 2130.

● (10:00 p.m.)

May I say at the outset that there are times when a minister or a parliamentary secretary in replying to a late show question complains that the questioner brought forward material that had not been introduced when the original question was asked. I admit there are times when we on the opposition side do expand our questions. But may I draw the attention of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, because I assume he is answering my question tonight, to the fact that when I asked this question on December 18, it had two parts. I hope he can reply tonight to both parts.

The first part of my question had to do with the tabling of the white paper on social security. I urged, indeed, that it be tabled without further delay and expressed the hope

[Mr. Horner.]

that it might be tabled when we came back in January. That, of course, did not happen and we are now in the month of February. I still urge upon the government the early tabling of this white paper on social security but I may say—this is an enlargement of what I said on December 18—that we over here feel we should not only have the white paper on social security but we should be given in public the Willard report which we understand is the basis for the white paper.

I stress the point that in these days when we are being sold the idea of Information Canada and being told that this government wants to give us all the information it can, it just is not in keeping with that stance for us to be refused an important document like the Willard report on social security. Mr. Speaker, if there is anything to this talk of participatory democracy, if there is anything to the idea that the government agrees to the recommendation of the task force on information that all reports should be made public, here is an opportunity to show it. The whole question of social security is a terribly important area, and I submit we are entitled to see the Willard report and to have the government white paper on social security with the least possible delay.

Mr. Speaker, the other part of my question on December 18, was in these words:

May I again ask the minister whether, in view of the delay in tabling the white paper, the government will consider providing for an interim increase in the old age security pension?

I received no answer to that question on that occasion just as I received no answer two nights before, so I put it again, Mr. Speaker. Everyone knows that our older and retired people are having a most difficult time to keep up with the rising cost of living. They are mentioned every time the subject of inflation comes up—the poor pensioners, the people on fixed incomes. I commend the government for recognizing this need in the case of retired civil servants whose pensions are to be increased in April this year. I submit that this need is real for all our retired people. It does make sense in today's conditions to come through with an increase in the basic amount of the old age pension, and I urge that this be done.

I do not know what the Willard report recommended nor what the white paper on social security will say, but surely these reports do not suggest going back to the means test or passing the buck to the provinces. Surely they confirm that we should