

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion***PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

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

PUBLIC SERVICE—COMMITTEE STUDYING INCREASES IN PENSIONS OF RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 11, as recorded in *Hansard* at page 5372, I asked the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) this question:

In view of the assurance the minister gave on January 8 to representatives of retired civil servants that the question of increasing their pensions would be studied by a committee with the hope that a report would be forthcoming in three or four weeks, can the hon. gentleman say whether such a report is yet ready?

The reply of the President of the Treasury Board was:

Not yet, Mr. Speaker.

In the next brief exchange I was of course given the usual assurance that the matter is still under serious study. Another month has gone by and apparently the report of that committee is not yet available. The story of disappointments on the part of retired civil servants is a long one. Time and time again their hopes have been raised by announcements or statements of this kind. It is too bad that we have yet another one.

I have been informed by a good many retired civil servants, particularly by a number of those who met with the President of the Treasury Board, that it was their clear understanding on January 8 that something would be reported to them within three or four weeks. Two months have now gone by and nothing has been indicated.

We have now had it made known to us that there will be debate on Friday of this week on second reading of Bill C-178 which proposes to amend the Public Service Superannuation Act and three or four other corresponding acts. We, of course, have copies of that bill, first reading having been given to it Friday, March 7. But any hope that it might have contained pension increases is of course destroyed by the fact that they are not in that bill. This is very disappointing.

• (10:00 p.m.)

On another occasion, February 4 to be exact, I drew the attention of the President of

the Treasury Board to the fact that recently in the United Kingdom, for the seventh time since the end of world war II, a pensions increase bill was brought in which increased the pensions of retired civil servants of that country. I have before me a schedule of those increases. This bill is to be effective on April 1, 1969. The schedule shows that when this new bill is in effect the increases in the pensions of retired civil servants will vary from 2 per cent of the total pension for those retired very recently up as high as 18 per cent for those retired back in 1955. I mention this just to make the point again that it can be done. It is not some pipe dream which some of us have; it is not some fanciful notion. It has been done in a good many other jurisdictions. Many of us in this house in all parties believe it can and ought to be done here.

I regret very much that after these two months there is still no forthright announcement as promised on January 8, but perhaps I should still live in hope and dare believe that on Friday of this week when the President of the Treasury Board moves the second reading of Bill C-178 he will make an announcement at that time concerning what will be done, and also when it will be done, to increase the pensions of these very deserving people, the retired federal civil servants of this country.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Acting Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I wish to compliment the hon. member upon his persistence in advocating this particular good cause. There is of course available to him a selection of many good causes, some more or less meritorious in comparison to this one. I should just like to assure him that this particular good cause remains under consideration.

PENSIONS—CONSIDERATION OF UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE OF ESCALATION

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the admission of the minister who answered my last question that there are many good causes for which one might work. He has not been here very long but he has discovered already that with a Liberal government in power there are many things for which we have to fight.

It is a bit of a coincidence that these two questions of mine should both be the subject of the late show this evening. This one arises out of a question I asked on Thursday, February 27, as recorded in *Hansard* at pages 6006 and 6007. My question was addressed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare