

*Retirement Age*

opportunity for the questions it raises to be considered. I wanted to make that clear at the outset. I will make my remarks brief so that the Government will have the opportunity to talk out the Bill.

The Bill raises a lot of questions. I think the Hon. Member who just spoke raised an important concern, if I understood him to say that we ought not to throw out mandatory retirement lightly. The abolition of mandatory retirement would create a lot of problems that have not been considered in detail by its critics. In the days when people had to work beyond the age of 65, the advent of mandatory requirement was regarded as an achievement. I think we should remember that point.

I believe that the answer to the problem lies in greater flexibility of retirement age with more opportunity for voluntary retirement without penalty earlier than at age 65—and I stress, without penalty. Because if we decide that early retirement ought to be more of an option, people have to be able to choose this in such a way that they are guaranteed economic security. Thus we should strive for more voluntary retirement without penalty, from age 55 onwards and for more flexibility about mandatory retirement. The objective should be an improved lifestyle, pursued for social and health reasons, and not because more and more people feel the economic necessity of working beyond 65 either because they cannot trust the Government to leave their Old Age Security payments alone—perhaps the only element of their pension future which may be indexed against inflation—or because they cannot afford to quit working because they do not have a private pension plan.

Thus, if we should move in the direction of less mandatory retirement, it should be but for positive reasons, rather than responding to problems arising from the absence of adequate

pension schemes or adequate economic policies. This we must keep in mind, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly appropriate for us to reflect on the age of retirement and on the need for society to overcome the perception that people become unproductive at age 65. We must consider the whole concept of work and the meaning it gives to life and the other ways in which people may feel that they contribute to society. We must take all these things into consideration.

I am sorry that I did not have more time this afternoon to go into the matter, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Jack Masters (Thunder Bay-Nipigon):** Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to have made some comments on the Bill, but time is running out. One of the provisions of the Bill, if enacted, would result in the removal of the mandatory retirement age of 65 for the Public Service now specified in the regulations made pursuant to the Public Service Superannuation Act. Mandatory retirement at age 65 within the federal Public Service is a subject which has been and continues to come under very careful examination within the Treasury Board Secretariat. While the Bill has merit, we must recognize that it is complicated and deserves further study. I hope that when we have more information on the subject we may see some changes coming in this direction.

I see that it is six o'clock, Mr. Speaker, so I shall continue my remarks at another time.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. It being six o'clock, the House adjourns until eleven o'clock tomorrow morning, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 2(1).

At 6 p.m., the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.