

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

went into the mines and forests of this country, and they were pioners as well. We are almost at the very end of our centennial celebrations, yet this government begrudges to these people this centennial bonus of \$100 which could be the frosting on the cake as far as the celebrations are concerned.

• (10:20 p.m.)

Mrs. Rideout: Ah.

Mr. Nasserden: The hon. lady says "ah". I know this astounds her because she cannot help but feel for these people, as does everybody in the house. Considering there is a surplus in the old age security fund, and that it would only require a few more million dollars to make this payment possible, and, in view of the fact that hundreds of millions have been spent during past years on the centennial celebrations, surely this is a legitimate grievance to raise. This is particularly so in light of the ideals and hopes of those who laid the foundations of the Canada we have today. I hope the parliamentary secretary to the minister will use her influence with both the minister and the government to make this payment possible.

The minister said that he would take this suggestion to the Minister of Finance. Nothing has happened and I can only draw one conclusion. What has happened to the influence of the minister of national health when he cannot budge the Minister of Finance on this important question? This is one matter about which the people in the maritimes in particular will have to ask themselves. People all across the country will wonder why in none of the three budgets which have been

presented in little more than a year there is any provision for a centennial bonus. All that has been provided is something like \$2.10 per month for the old age security recipients in order to meet the rise in the cost of living.

Without saying anything further I would be very interested to hear the parliamentary secretary tell us when the government is going to bring this centennial bonus into being.

Mrs. Margaret Rideout (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's suggestion with much interest, and indeed the government has examined his proposal with a great deal of concern. The hon. member's suggestion of a \$100 centennial bonus to the recipients of old age security and the guaranteed annual income supplement is a very noble one, but one item he neglected to mention is that the cost to the federal treasury would be something in excess of \$125 million. It was therefore thought inadvisable, particularly in this period of heavy inflationary pressure, to ask the government to spend this amount of money at this time.

As a personal observation to the hon. member, who I know is very sincere and dedicated in his responsibilities as a member of parliament, may I say that his proposal is not really entirely in accordance with the economic principles expounded by the members of his own party.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.26 p.m.
