

plication that the government might have proceeded with this conference a little more quickly.

Mr. CLARK (Burrard): If I am wrong in that I shall only be too willing to be corrected. But that certainly was my hope, that by bringing the matter to the attention of the government the earliest possible action might be taken.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Well, I think I can show my hon. friend that the government did do all that was possible under the circumstances. The Senate adjourned its sitting until eleven o'clock this morning. We adjourned ours until half past twelve in the hope that we would have a report from the Senate as soon as we reassembled which would enable us to see their position in this matter. My hon. friend has been in the House this morning and he has observed that no report came from the Senate. Even at half past twelve we were without information, in fact we suspended the business of the House to enable us to get this report, and the moment it was received we took action.

Mr. CLARK: Instead of sending the bill back could we not then have appointed a committee to confer with the Senate?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: We could not because we did not know what the action of the Senate would be in the matter. I think this statement fully answers my hon. friend's point.

Mr. T. W. CALDWELL (Victoria and Carleton): I feel that parliament at the present time is facing a rather serious situation. I do not wish to say anything that will be considered as contrary to the rules of the House in this discussion, and I hardly know how I am going to express my feelings in the matter without doing so.

An hon. MEMBER: Suspend the rules.

Mr. CALDWELL: If you find, Mr. Speaker, that I am getting beyond the rules I shall be pleased to be called to order. An hon. member has suggested that we should suspend the rules.

Mr. SPEAKER: Suspend the sitting.

Mr. CALDWELL: With regard to these Pension Act amendments it has been stated that the reason they could not be concurred in by the Upper House was because they had gone through this House with very little discussion. I will admit at once that was a fact. As a member of the committee I did not feel

it was necessary to discuss these amendments before the House because the government had appointed a royal commission.

Mr. BELAND: Two years ago.

Mr. CALDWELL: Yes, two years ago which has been considering these proposals ever since, which has held a very extended investigation, and has made a very complete report on the conditions as it found them and suggested remedies therefor. That report has been available to the members of this House and, I presume, to members of the other House as well. While the sittings of the Pension committee were going on this session the proceedings were printed from day to day. The evidence in its entirety, and even the discussion by the members of the committee, was printed up till the final sitting of the committee to prepare the report. I repeat, this evidence was available for the members of the House and, I presume, for the members of the Upper Chamber as well. Therefore, I think, Mr. Speaker, no member of this House, especially the members of the Pensions committee, felt it necessary to discuss the report of that committee as to these amendments. If legislators in this country have not seen fit to take time to read the report of the Ralston commission and the evidence given before the Pensions committee, I do not know that this House can be held responsible for that. I contend it has been available, and been available for some length of time. I will admit this, however; I think it is inadvisable that legislation should be sent to the Senate at so late a date if there is no means available for them to have information on the matter. However, I feel that the Pensions bill does not come under that head because both the Ralston report and the evidence of the committee have been at the disposal of the members of both Houses. The Pensions bill is not like a measure that is introduced in the dying days of the session and passed even with discussion. In such a case as that there is very limited time for the Upper Chamber to consider what has been said or done here. But I contend that this bill does not come under that category at all.

I should like to support the hon. member for West Kootenay (Mr. Humphrey) in the suggestion that a conference should be held over this matter. I feel that the question is so serious, the matter of the pensions amendment is so important, there is so much involved that we cannot afford to even stand on our dignity in this House in regard to taking every available means to come to some