

arguments against making adjustments in the Public Service for retired public servants. They contribute so much to a pension plan, and the plan is funded to take care of this responsibility. What they get out is relative to what they put in and is relative to the salaries at the time they make their contributions, and it is the same as pension plans across the country. It is not a problem unique to the Public Service.

Mr. KNOWLES: I do not want to throw cold water on the encouragement that Mr. Bell gets out of the minister's assurance, but I would like to know just what this assurance means. Let me put it this way. When the present Government first came into office we had the assurance of the then Minister of Finance that this matter of adjustment of pensions on retirement would be considered. This built up to where consultations seemed to be taking place, where hopes mounted. Then the point was reached when the answer was pretty firm to the effect that nothing would be done. The Minister of Finance is the one who knows.

Mr. CARON: Mr. Chairman, I wish to raise a point of order. We are not discussing that plan, we are discussing Bill C-193, and I think we should go on with this. It is not the time to discuss what might happen to those who are retired.

Mr. KNOWLES: Mr. Chairman, one can see that if this is a point of order it should have been made 10 minutes ago. We do have a bill to amend a group of superannuation statutes, and some statement on this as to whether or not this is just the usual answer to whether the Government really is going on to a new round of considerations.

The Co-CHAIRMAN (*Mr. Richard*): I think you will agree, Mr. Knowles, that at the present time this committee is not considering pensions of retired civil servants. However, I quite agree that it was a good thing to have a short statement, because the matter has been in everybody's mind. My feeling is that we have received about the only kind of answer we can receive at the present time from the Minister of National Revenue, who is not the Minister of Finance and who cannot speak for Government policy which has not been enunciated yet.

Hon. Mr. BENSON: I would not like anyone to take anything I have said as assurance of anything. What I have said is that we have been looking at these matters; and this is a fact. Documents are prepared which I have been studying in this regard, and I cannot say any more than that it is not an assurance of any kind. There is no change in Government policy. I cannot make a unilateral change in Government policy. I am reviewing the matters, that is all.

Mr. CHATTERTON: If the contention is raised that we cannot discuss a problem of superannuation, I think that is completely wrong, because representatives are appearing before us and I think it is definitely their concern. They have an interest and stake in this.

The Co-CHAIRMAN (*Mr. Richard*): Not in this present bill. Those who are already retired are not affected by this bill.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Well, that is the contention, but these people believe they have a stake.

The Co-CHAIRMAN (*Mr. Richard*): I think they have a stake, not in this bill, but in any legislation. May we make that clear I am sure what the honourable