

House of Commons

as to insure that it and complementary pensions and retirement allowance legislation in Canada are based upon the following principles:

(a) the immediate increase of the old age pension to \$100.00 per month to all present recipients, and the integration and payment of such pensions out of the pension fund as amended;

(b) the establishment of a plan to provide a national minimum retirement income, participation in such a plan to be available but not compulsory to all;

(c) that a national retirement pensions plan should not be compulsorily superimposed on existing pension and retirement plans, but should be supplementary to them, on the basis of filling in gaps in coverage of existing retirement and superannuation plans so that all are covered up to the level established under sub-paragraph (b), participation being, however, elective to those who are already covered to or beyond that level;

(d) that true portability of pensions as between industries and areas, which is not affected by the present plan, be the continuing aim of pensions legislation and negotiation;

(e) that certain specific and foolish anomalies, such as those whereby more than one employer may be compelled to make a full annual contribution in respect of the same employee, with no right of recovery from the fund, and whereby some housewives will be compelled to make deduction from the wages of domestic help while others will not, although the basic wage rate is the same, be eliminated.

Mr. Fairweather: Mr. Speaker, I have been asked by the hon. member for Perth to request that this item be allowed to stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Stand, at the request of the government.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SUGGESTED PROGRAMS OF INTERNSHIP IN LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington South) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should give consideration to the advisability of establishing a form of internship program in the House of Commons; the purpose of the said program being to better equip outstanding young political scientists, journalists and law school faculty members, with a better understanding of the national legislative process; the participants to be brought to Ottawa for six to nine months of full-time work as assistants to members of the House of Commons and to be paid a minimum stipend financed by the government and an established foundation grant, competition for the fellowship to be made each year, announced to coincide with the opening of a session.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity afforded hon. members in private members' hour of being able to bring forth ideas and suggestions that they feel might be of benefit to this worthy chamber, to hon. members or to the government at large.

The motion I have presumed to bring to the attention of the house is one that was conceived out of the accumulation of work which I have found on my desk and on my shoulders since I have been a member of parliament for approximately the last ten years. I am sure that many other hon. members of this house have found that the amount of work which falls to their lot has become greater and greater as the years go on. I do not suppose there is one member in this chamber who would not admit that the ever-increasing amount of work, the great amount of reading, the numerous briefs and the great amount of research that falls to his lot as a member has become even greater and greater as the years have gone by.

I am sure that many of us come into this house not as well prepared as we would like to be to deal with the great mass of legislation that we are confronted with from time to time. Such unpreparedness makes the load of the member heavier and heavier. To illustrate what I mean, one has only to think of the Canada Assistance Plan bill that is before the house at the present time. With all the great complexity of this piece of legislation, how is any hon. member supposed to understand it as well as he should without first having had some assistance or some time to study it? Looking back, the same thing could be said about that enormous piece of legislation that was brought before the house and passed, namely, the Canada Pension Plan.

I ask, what can be done to help to rectify the existing problem of which I have spoken? Possibly the answer in part lies in the resolution I have put before the house. It says:

That . . . the government should give consideration to the advisability of establishing a form of internship program in the House of Commons; the purpose of the said program being to better equip outstanding young political scientists, journalists and law school faculty members, with a better understanding of the national legislative process; the participants to be brought to Ottawa for six to nine months of full-time work as assistants to members of the House of Commons and to be paid a minimum stipend financed by the government and an established foundation grant, competition for the fellowship to be made each year, announced to coincide with the opening of a session.

This resolution is twofold in purpose. It will provide outstanding help to students who participate as interns and will also be of great help to the member of parliament. I have suggested here only three classes of interns, namely, political science students, law students and journalists. My reasoning behind this is that I feel it would be better to