

*Motion for Adjournment*

then to ask them to wait until fall is unfair and unkind on the part of the government.

I know, if we are asked to wait until fall on this issue, that there will be other matters that will have priority. We would not reach the matter until October or November, and these people would not get their increases until next December or January. I know further, Mr. Speaker, that unless action is taken now we have no guarantee that action will be taken in the fall.

Even yesterday when the President of the Treasury Board was asked questions he did not firmly say it will be done. He did not firmly say any increases will be made retroactive. Rather, he expressed the hope, the personal belief, that it ought to be done. Anyone can read the signs. It means that this matter has not yet been approved by the government and that the whole question is not only being delayed but is in jeopardy.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, after the government's action in referring this matter to a special joint committee, after that committee's thorough consideration, after that committee making a unanimous recommendation that increases be made, and in view of the fact something like this was done a number of years ago, it is unthinkable for action not to be taken on this issue.

To argue that it sets a pattern for pensions in other areas is fine. Of course it does. It is time we were setting such a pattern. It is time the government of Canada acted as a good employer and gave a lead in this matter by facing up to the fact that retired people have the right to be able to live in retirement on incomes that will expand and grow as the cost of living increases and as the standard of living improves. It is no argument against taking action in this field to say it is setting a pattern that will have to be followed in other areas. Of course it will set such a pattern and I want that pattern to be followed.

What I am concerned about is that a government which led us to believe that action would be taken, and has led us to believe that for months, is now saying, "Oh no, you cannot do anything about it before the summer break. We have got to go home some time today and we will deal with this matter in the fall." I regard this as callous, as most unfair, and as quite unnecessary. In my view parliament should stay here long enough to deal with this issue. I think this issue could be dealt with today, but under the government's motion we will not be able to do so because just as soon as we get word from the Senate

[Mr. Knowles.]

that they have passed last night's supply bills there will be a letter read from the Chair to the effect that the Deputy to the Governor General is over there, and so the guillotine will fall and we can deal with nothing further.

If it is necessary to stay another day or two I think this parliament owes it to our retired civil servants and owes it to our retired people generally to do so. I urge that there be an end to the kind of excuses that the President of the Treasury Board has been giving. I urge that there be an end to these appeals from members opposite that some of us be patient and wait until the fall. I say that if we wait until fall and people get these increases in December or January, some of the pensioners involved will not get them. Some of them will have died in the meantime and others will suffer for the want of whatever increase they are going to get out of the government's promise.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say again that I quite approve of the idea of this parliament taking a recess. I was in on the consultation as to the date of our return, and I support the date of September 25, but I do not agree with our leaving now without dealing with this issue. I contend it could be dealt with today. That would be fine, but if it cannot be dealt with today we should stay here until it is dealt with, no matter how long it takes.

Therefore to bring this about, to make the motion one that is acceptable and more responsible I move, seconded by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett):

That the motion be amended by inserting therein, immediately after the words "and to any other measures," the following words: "including a measure respecting the pensions of retired civil servants."

You will note, Mr. Speaker, that if my amendment is accepted and these words are inserted the first part of the motion as amended would read as follows:

That the house adjourn immediately following the giving of Royal Assent to the supply bills referred to in paragraph (5) of the special order made Monday, June 26, 1967, and to any other measures, including a measure respecting the pensions of retired civil servants, and that the house shall stand adjourned until Monday, September 25, 1967, at 2.30 o'clock p.m.;—

• (11:50 a.m.)

I need not read the rest of the motion because it is only that first part which is affected by my amendment. I contend that the good name of parliament, as a responsible body which does not fool people, which does not build up their hopes and then let them