

Pensions

private sector employees would be only too happy to contribute at a comparable rate if their employers would agree to provide comparable benefits.

In view of the furore created over this issue, the actuarial firm of Tomenson-Alexander was commissioned on March 23, 1977 by Treasury Board to determine the future cost implications, advise on the extent to which the compensation policy takes account of benefits under PSSA and SRBA, comment on the "Basic Facts" paper, assess other actuarial considerations and make recommendations regarding future actuarial investigations and reports. The report was sent to the then president of treasury board on November 30, 1977 and released on March 9, 1978, at which time several amendments to the act were indicated.

The report was very interesting. It indicated that no valuation of the plan had been made since December 31, 1972, before unlimited indexing was introduced. Not only had the government not found out what the plan was going to cost before they introduced it, but they had not found out what the plan was actually costing after they introduced it. This surely is the height of folly. If we are ever to convince the general public that public servants do not regard the public purse as virtually bottomless, as the Auditor General alleges, we must begin to subject ourselves at least to the rudimentary discipline of finding out what on earth these programs we have adopted cost or will cost.

The actuarial commission pointed out that the government was not funding its pensions in anything like the manner accepted in the private sector. In making comparisons with the private sector the government was even confusing the true cost incurred by the program with the smaller amounts that it was setting aside year by year.

In his introductory remarks to the House, the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Buchanan) referred to the \$490 million that the government is setting aside each year as the cost of these benefits. The point is that \$490 million is not the true cost. They are not reporting the cost according to generally accepted accounting principles; that is the point. The government sets one set of rules for itself, rules that the private sector cannot possibly match, and then tries to pretend that the cost is much lower.

Another point in the initial address by the President of Treasury Board was that the government felt that private sector employers should be encouraged to introduce benefits along the same lines as public service pensions. If the private sector did that, it would have to conform to the rules of accounting for costs of pension plans available in the private sector. They would have to charge through an extra 10 to 20 per cent on salary. In other words, if they adopted these plans it would be equivalent to a 10 to 20 per cent salary increase on top of the regular salary increase.

A week ago we had the spectacle of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) hectoring the banks for giving bank tellers a total increase of 11.5 per cent. The President of the Treasury Board is suggesting they should get an additional 10 to 20 per cent on top of their normal increase to bring them up to the govern-

[Mr. McCrossan.]

ment's level. Who is directing the economic policy of the country? On one hand we have people saying—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please.

● (1700)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster)—Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation—Community services program—Signing of agreement with Ontario; the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay)—Government Expenditures—Policy respecting ex gratia payments; the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow)—Labour Conditions—Request for details of wage settlements.

It being five o'clock the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely notices of motions, public bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, there seems to be unanimous consent for the House to proceed with the debate on notice of motion No. 15, and for the other notices of motions to stand and retain their rank.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Is it agreed that motions Nos. 7, 9, 13 and 14 are allowed to stand by consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Agreed and so ordered.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

MEASURE PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF A HOUSEWIVES' ALLOWANCE

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of having parliament adopt a measure authorizing payment of an allowance to housewives who remain at home to take care of their family instead of joining the labour market, the purpose being to ensure a global income corresponding to the family's needs by providing an additional family income to that earned by the father.