

have melted and the test is revealed in its true form, I am sure it will be known as a means test.

Yesterday I received a letter which I should like to put on the record. I asked my correspondent for his permission to do so and, if necessary, I will state his name. It is dated December 9. He writes the following:

I am one of many elderly citizens now coming due for old age pension, and know that such people have weathered two world wars, depression, low incomes, and many difficulties. Many, of such as we, have saved, economized and often gone without much that we would have liked to have had, in order to have our own home. During this period that we have experienced many companies had no pension scheme, or had non-contributory schemes, resulting in a man receiving no pension or very little. The new pension schemes do not help us very much.

Further the salaries and hourly rates have been very small during the years.

Many have not been able to save much and these have to rely on welfare or relatives.

● (6:00 p.m.)

There are, however, many of us who have not smoked or drank liquor and somehow have been able to get a home paid for. True the homes are worth more now, but rising costs of living, taxes, etc. make living increasingly difficult, this cannot be denied.

If increase in old age pension is given by the means test, those who have not saved will qualify for the whole amount, but a man owning a well kept home will be told to sell his home, and live on the income from the sale. This sounds easy, but looking into it shows that such people are in a difficult plight. The cost of living in a good senior citizens home is very high.

The social workers say "Stay in your own home, it will not cost the government or city so much".

Thus you will concede such people need the increase in O.A.P. as much as anyone but the means test will block them.

I recently saw that the member for Brantford advertised in the London paper that he stands for \$105 per month all round. I wrote to him along the above lines.

This letter is from a man, Mr. Speaker, who formerly came from the riding of the minister of external affairs but who is now living in my riding. He is paying tribute to the words of the hon. member for Brantford (Mr. Brown), and I must pay tribute to him too. I have pushed a chair aside for him here, and if he were in his seat I would ask him to join me on this side of the house.

I also understand that, in addition to this test, there is to be an appeals procedure. I should like the minister to enlarge on exactly what this appeals procedure means. How will it work, what will it do? Does it mean that some of the statements made by these pensioners will not be accepted as valid, or what

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does it mean? To what extent is snooping to be encouraged? How embarrassing will these procedures be? What kind of test is it to which the minister makes reference?

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed and discouraged that this whole legislative program has not been made a little more comprehensive. However, I have no recourse but to support it, for even in its present form it will help so many people who are in dire need. But is it not just too bad that we cannot have a little bit of respect for the dignity of the individual and particularly for our elderly citizens? Many of these people have worked hard and have made great contributions in so many different ways to this great country in which we are privileged to live. Through no fault of their own in many cases, they find themselves financially embarrassed in the evening of their lives at a time, when they should be enjoying a certain amount of contentment and happiness.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, I circulated 40,000 copies of a questionnaire to householders, regardless of their position or wealth. Within the last 10 days I have had 3,000 replies, and one of the important questions that I asked was as follows: Do you approve or disapprove of an increase of old age security to \$100 a month with no means test or other tests? In answer, 79.51 per cent said they approved it; 19.42 per cent disapproved; and 1.07 per cent made no comment. I think this is a good test case, Mr. Speaker.

These 3,000 replies are available in my office to anyone who wishes to see them, Mr. Speaker, but I think they show what the people want. We are here to give the people, as far as possible, those things that they need.

I should like to close by saying that dependency is, perhaps, one of the strongest bonds of society. All men are made dependent upon one another for protection and security. We, in this house, have a solemn responsibility resting squarely on our shoulders, no matter where we may sit. This responsibility is to look after our elderly people who need assistance.

[Translation]

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be