

speech he made here I advised him that this was not a good thing. I sent his speech to hundreds of thousands of Canadians and I feel my party received at least 75,000 potential votes for the next election as a result. I am going to send this speech of his out tomorrow.

Such partisanship has made enemies for the government which the minister has recently joined. I first met the minister in the great city of Fredericton in 1963 at a thinker's conference sponsored by the Progressive Conservative Party. At that time he made an excellent speech, learned, thoughtful and modest. We have heard a lot tonight about what is going to be done. I was impressed that the minister should mention the family allowances tonight and that we are to have a change; it is not going up, it is going down. Why? He did not tell us that.

We are also told again that there will be discussions about the Canada Pension Plan. Did it not occur to the minister before this that some amelioration might have been made, and did he not think of discussing this with the provincial ministers, his counterparts, before this? I fear that the minister spends too much time comparing Grits and Tories and adding up the facts, as he calls them, and too little time on proper consultation that would make for a better discharge of his duties.

This legislation tonight demonstrates several things. As I and other members of this House told the minister when he brought about the increase in the old age security, it is not enough. It has proven to be not enough at the present time. It also indicates that the galloping inflation is going so fast that we must jack it up every three months now instead of once a year. That is a fact of life. But he does not learn the facts of life. He likes to compute what went on over the past.

If he wants some computations and compilations he may recall that had the original pension as it stood in 1963 kept abreast merely in purchasing power it would now be \$107.50, without any increase at all, maintaining the original purchasing power that it had on that dreary day when his party took over the reins of office in this country. The bill demonstrates something else. The people on fixed incomes, especially the older people, have been bearing too much of the burden of inflation which this government has allowed to get out of hand in these many months.

Most significantly of all this measure, puny though it is, demonstrates and underlines and underscores that we have in Canada today a grave economic situation, and that in the face of that we have the government piddling. We are not dealing with the issues. We are not getting the economy straightened out. We are not bringing prosperity to the land. We are not controlling inflation. So we seek by bits and pieces and by transfers of income to tinker and gear up in a short-range way instead of tackling the problem.

The economy is sick; that is the problem. We pretty well recognize in this legislation that inflation has now become a way of life. I suppose that during the life of the government—if I may use that word a bit loosely—we will have eternal inflation. So we need to take these temporizing, band-aid measures such as the one before us. I intend to support this measure as I supported it when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) first suggested it several months ago.

Old Age Security

At that time the minister described the suggestion as a nightmare. That was the word he used. He said the administrative cost would be enormous and that they could not cope with it. Tonight he made that Freudian slip about which part of York was which and told us of his answer in March. I will repeat to him what he said on May 22 when an even more able colleague from Fraser Valley East (Mr. Patterson) asked him about this. He said in the committee on May 22:

We have come to the conclusion that the costs of adjustments on a quarterly basis, for instance, imply a large administrative load and large administrative costs relative to the benefits that are really being given out.

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Macquarrie: So the nightmare of yesterday has become the glory of today. The minister talks a lot about visiting the provincial capitals for consultation. I think he has been somewhere else. He has been to Damascus lately too. Tonight we see that the stone which the builder rejected a few months ago has now become the cornerstone of the temple. But considering the ersatz temple of ad hockery being feverishly constructed by this government, I suppose we need not be surprised at such snatchings and graspings from the platforms of other parties. Indeed sometimes the more our policies are derided the more quickly they are snatched away. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and plagiarism implies certain value judgments. I suppose it is better to be right in the end than never right at all. It is well he went to Fredericton because he has made a belated judgment on a limited aspect of the suggestions of our party. He talked of the medicines we have put on display. He should analyze them pretty carefully because he is likely to be swallowing some of them, as he has demonstrated tonight.

The minister flatters us by taking our policies, but I would like him to do a little more and to note that we are a dynamic party and tend to keep abreast of developments. While we continue to suggest this, if he were listening carefully a short while ago he would have known that we had advised a degree of retroactivity on this. Had he listened a little more carefully, he would have brought forth a measure that would have put July there instead of October.

• (2100)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Macquarrie: If he has had such a tremendous transformation of his department that he can do with great dispatch what was an impossible nightmare in March and May, surely there would be no great difficulty in gearing this measure to July instead of October. Because, God knows, there were plenty of price increases from July to the present day, and there will be plenty from July to October. Let the old people of Canada who bear the burden of these price increases in the long hot summer of Liberalism get a little more benefit out of this. That is the suggestion we made to him and he should have paid attention to it. It could have been July as easily as October.

I say to him also that he wants to take careful note of the many people in the country who may not benefit from this. He did not discuss the war veterans. What does this