

Old Age Security Act

I feel we should not, as responsible parliamentarians, use the problems of old people for petty partisan politics. Those people are entitled to some security in their old age and that is not a gift. If Canada can assist them, it is because they made good use of the time available to them to build our country.

The government is now administrating the country's resources, distributing them to give security to these people who have deserved it. The government does not create resources, it merely distributes them, grants assistance and recognizes the rights of these people.

I for one consider the increase in the guaranteed income supplement to be inadequate. I base my claim on the fact that many of these people have to live in old people's homes. They find some comfort in those homes but, considering the increase in the cost of living and in the construction cost of such homes, and considering the obligations of the companies building them, the cost of room and board for the aged increases so much in some homes that they are asked to pay \$180 a month, because of the high cost of financing.

I wish to call the attention of the House to this: in the province of Quebec, they played politics with the question of homes, when they are partly financed by the central government. The truth should at least be told. There are enough problems, enough things of which we are accused, so that, at least, when some things are done properly, let us say so.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that, to my mind, the amendment was justified since today most people of 60 are turned down on the labour market. According to the act as it stands, they are not eligible for the old age pension. What will we do with those of them who have no income? We must do something for them and that is precisely why an amendment was proposed asking the government to amend the bill they they might become eligible.

Granting that right to people of 60 to 65 will in no way harm the disabled, the widows, those who are in difficult circumstances, even if they are not yet 60.

Some day, sooner or later, although we may think of it as utopian now, it will have to come to that; it might as well be sooner, not only for those people who are 60 to 65 but also for the young who are waiting to get into the labour force. That will enable Canada to provide employment for young people; that will help solve a problem and will have beneficial effects on the social climate.

I believe we are right to say we do not have the financial means that would be necessary. The present system should be reformed so that finance should be at the service of people, young and old alike.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with the provisions of the special order adopted on Wednesday, May 17, I must interrupt this debate and put immediately any question that would be required to dispose of this bill.

• (1600)

[English]

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

PENSION ACT, WAR VETERANS ALLOWANCE ACT AND OTHER ACTS**AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-208, to amend the Pension Act, the War Veterans Allowance Act, the Civilian War Pensions and Allowance Act, the Children of War Dead (Education Assistance) Act and the Department of Veterans Affairs Act, to provide for the annual adjustment of pensions and allowances payable thereunder, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Veterans Affairs) moved that Bill C-208 to amend the Pension Act, the War Veterans Allowance Act, the Civilian War Pensions and Allowance Act, the Children of War Dead (Education Assistance) Act and the Department of Veterans Affairs Act, to provide for the annual adjustment of pensions and allowances payable thereunder, be concurred in.

Motion for concurrence agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the said bill be read a third time?

Some hon. Members: By leave now.

Mr. Speaker: By consent now?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Laing moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, in the past week we have had to deal with two important measures introduced by the government. Even though some other bills have been introduced, we have been able to reach third reading stage on Bill C-207, to amend the Old Age Security Act, and also have been able to report the same progress on Bill C-208, to amend the Pension Act, which is before us at the present moment. This must be some sort of record, Mr. Speaker, but the important thing is that through co-operation from all parties we can progress with legislation in a non-partisan manner, if that legislation will benefit the citizens of our country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: That does not happen too often here.

Mr. Marshall: It should be worth noting also for the record that these two bills were introduced for first reading just one week ago. This illustrates just what can be done. In just seven days, two important pieces of legislation have received first and second reading, have gone through committee stage, and should receive third reading today. Furthermore, following consideration in the other place, the two bills can receive Royal Assent by the early part of next week. So, let it never be said again by the government that there has been a lack of co-operation by opposition parties, unless the legislation introduced must be challenged for its content for the benefit of Canadians. I am sorry to say, however, and I will continue