

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, at the outset I want to say to the Minister, quite frankly—why is he shaking his head? Are you paying attention or just sitting there fooling around?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain has the floor for debate.

Mr. Deans: That is what I thought you said, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): A point of order.

Mr. Deans: We can't have the floor at the same time.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): I want to tell the House Leader of the NDP that he has also occasionally risen on points of order for clarification.

I would like some clarification from the Chair. When someone from an opposition Party has spoken, in terms of numbers in the House, do you not then go to the government side?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I believe that Citation 301 on page 99 of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition indicates that the Speaker has the right to recognize any Member he sees rising in the Chamber. I did not see another Member rising except the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain. Therefore, I recognized him.

I now recognize the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain.

Mr. Deans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have thought that the Minister would want me to rise and speak. I was about to say, before I was so rudely interrupted by him, that we did in fact applaud this somewhat small but nevertheless necessary measure. I was taken aback when he leaped to his feet to try to stop me from saying that. I began to wonder whether I should be re-evaluating my position or whether perhaps I did not understand the nature of the Minister's efforts in this regard.

I want to say to the Minister that I was reading my *Hansard*, as I frequently do in the evenings when the House has risen and I am finished with the three or four hours of work in my office. I went home the other night, made myself a cup of coffee around 11.30 and got out my *Hansard* from April 26, 1982.

Mr. McDermid: Which your researcher found for you.

Mr. Deans: No, my researcher did not, strange though it may seem. I happen to read *Hansard* every evening before I go to sleep just to keep abreast of what the Government is doing.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): That explains a lot of things.

Mr. Deans: Members may recall that last week, when the Minister rose, he was pointing out how he went home and read over the reports and came to the conclusion that what he was doing was right. I went back and read over *Hansard* and came to the conclusion that, to the extent that the Minister, the Ministry and the Government are doing anything at all in this regard, what they are doing is right. In fact, not only is it

Old Age Security Act

right, it is consistent with what our Party has been suggesting the Minister ought to do for many years. In fact, as I was saying, as reported on page 16597 of *Hansard*, when the Liberal Party was in government, my good friend and former colleague, the previous Member for Winnipeg North Centre, the Hon. Stanley Knowles, now frequently seated at the table, asked the then Minister of Health and Welfare, the Hon. Monique Bégin, the following:

● (1600)

My question this afternoon relates to my concern about the unfairness of the plan respecting old age pensions under which certain women—there are some men but it is mostly women—between the ages of 60 and 65 can get a pension provided they are married to someone who is 65 or over. However, persons between the ages of 60 and 65 who are single, whose husbands died before that age, are not allowed any such pension. Will the Minister seriously consider a plan to change that, so that persons between the ages of 60 and 65 who are in need will get that kind of pension?

The Member went on to explain some other regrets. This was his first day back in the House, Mr. Speaker, you may recall, after he had suffered that rather serious illness from which he made a remarkable and miraculous recovery.

When I started, I wanted to congratulate the Minister for having recognized the need, and I do. I understand that for those who will receive this, it will be a godsend. They will be delighted to have it, and have it they must. I say to the Minister though that he has not quite gone far enough. The cost of going the extra distance is difficult to determine, I must say, but nevertheless it is a cost that I believe ought to be borne.

It is unnecessary, I suggest to the Minister, to restrict this payment to those individuals who have been married. The former Member for Winnipeg-North Centre, Mr. Knowles, made reference to that. In his question, in 1982, he indicated his concern for those between the ages of 60 and 65, who were single and who found themselves unable to continue to work for a number of economic or, for that matter, health reasons and who found themselves without any regular adequate income.

The Minister frequently speaks about compassion. I know him well enough to know that he speaks with conviction. He speaks with compassion about compassion. I do not in any way question him, and I think this would be an opportunity for him to display that compassion beyond what the Government may well have identified it wants to do in the meantime and to take into account the submissions of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Beaches (Mr. Young). He has suggested that perhaps this would be the time to enlarge the scope and to look at ways of taking into account the needs of those who were never married but who nevertheless are between the ages of 60 and 65—I want to talk about other people in a moment—and who are frankly in very difficult financial straits at this point in the history of Canada.

I must be honest and admit that I do not have an economic analysis of it—I do not know whether the Minister has or not and if he does, I would be interested to hear it—nor do I have any kind of accounting that would show me clearly and in