

Disabled Persons Act

was exceeded the other evening when I spoke. One of the newspapermen telephoned me the next day and he said, "Do you know that in 30 minutes you were interrupted 54 times?" That is about twice a minute.

An hon. Member: By your own members.

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think this discussion is very relevant, even in relation to what other members have said, to the debate that is before us.

I should now like to begin, although not in the way in which I intended to begin, by a reference to the speech made by the hon. member for Greenwood for whom I have as much respect as I have for any other hon. gentleman on the other side of the chamber, and a great deal more than I have for most hon. gentlemen over there. The hon. gentleman did something which I am sure was totally inadvertent. He misquoted my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would not have been so immodest as to claim that if a Liberal government had been in office there would necessarily have been the same degree of growth as there was when a Liberal government was in office. What the Leader of the Opposition said was that if the rate of growth that took place between 1946 and 1957 had continued there would have been no deficits in the last four years. He did not say anything about who was in office; he said that if the rate of growth had continued, there would have been no deficits in these last four years. That is a very different thing. But as my right hon. friend Mr. St. Laurent used to say so often, it may just be a coincidence that in the 20th century when we have had Liberal governments there has been growth, but when we have had Tory governments there has been stagnation; but if it is coincidence, would you not prefer to have that kind of coincidence? When the time comes to have another coincidence, I think the people of Canada may remember Mr. St. Laurent's words.

Mr. Johnson: Remember what you did to St. Laurent in the election.

Mr. Pickersgill: The Prime Minister, who introduced this totally irrelevant debate in which we have had a certain amount of satisfaction in taking part, said that the program of contributory old age pensions—

Mr. Campbell (Stormont): May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Pickersgill: —of the Liberal party had not made any impression—

Mr. Campbell (Stormont): May I ask the hon. member a question?

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

The Chairman: The hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate has not yielded the floor.

Mr. Pickersgill: As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, when I was interrupted by someone whom I cannot see, the Prime Minister said that the Liberal policy or the Liberal program for a contributory old age security system, to be erected on the basis we already have, had made no impression on the public. About that matter, of course, the public will one day give judgment and it may not be long from now. However, the Liberal plan certainly made a most profound impression on hon. gentlemen opposite as they cannot talk about anything else. From the Prime Minister down, they have become obsessed with it and they have been so obsessed ever since it was announced. I am convinced that the reason for this obsession undoubtedly is this. The Prime Minister has all those public relations people with whom he is surrounded who keep him insulated from the public, from the public business and the duties of government and who keep him constantly in the stratosphere of public relations. These gentlemen have been saying, "This Liberal program has made a real impression on the public and you have got to deflate it somehow".

I think there was only one deflation this afternoon and that was the deflation of the speech of the Prime Minister by my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition. Indeed, it would not be necessary at all for me to take any part whatsoever in this debate were it not for the fact that the Prime Minister made certain totally irrelevant observations.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

The Chairman: Order. There is such a marked propensity toward interruptions tonight that I would ask all hon. members to co-operate so that we may get on with the study of this resolution.

Mr. Pickersgill: I was saying, sir, that if it had not been for certain utterly irrelevant and also utterly incorrect observations made by the Prime Minister I would not have taken any part in this debate at all this evening. The Prime Minister sought to give the impression that nothing could be done by the government to provide a contributory old age program until there had been a constitutional amendment. This discovery of the Prime Minister was made only in the year 1962. He did not indicate that to the people in 1958 when he was telling them that as soon as the election was over they would get