

for whom this bill does nothing. Apart from those who are 65, 66, 67 or 68 years of age there is another very large group, namely, those who will not in any way benefit under the Canada Pension Plan when they reach the age of 65. This group includes housewives who will not have contributed and who will, therefore, get nothing under either this legislation or the Canada Pension Plan. It is true, of course, that they will be eligible for, and will automatically receive, the basic old age pension, whatever it may be at that time. I am referring now to the pension which is \$75 a month, and which may be escalated upwards by two per cent a year in keeping with the rise in the cost of living. This bill does nothing for that group of citizens.

The Senate Committee used the words "all citizens 65 years of age and over". I have mentioned two groups of citizens whom we are almost callously disregarding in this bill.

Fourthly, the Senate Committee asked that there be an immediate study made of these problems. I cannot reach any other conclusion, honourable senators, but that no real study has been made, and I shall return to this point in a moment or two. It is enough to say for the present, perhaps, that there is no evidence in this bill, or in any statement made by the Minister, or in any discussion of this bill in the other place, that the Government did anything to ensure that the present payments, sometimes amounting to \$30 a month, to our senior citizens under the assistance plans will not be cut off.

It is true, as the honourable sponsor of this bill (Hon. Mr. Connolly, Ottawa West) said, that these supplementary assistance payments are not considered income under this plan. That is a very generous gesture on the part of the Government. But, there are many assistance acts, some federal and some provincial, in which there is an income ceiling—an income ceiling that is higher than the ceiling created by this bill. I do not know what is going to happen. I am not saying that the provincial governments, or some departments of the federal Government, will immediately cut off this assistance. I do not say that, and I most certainly hope that that will not happen.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): You are thinking of British Columbia, I suppose?

Hon. Mr. Grosart: I am thinking not only of British Columbia but also of Prince Edward Island, which the honourable Leader of the Government mentioned. Prince Edward Island, unlike any other Canadian province, has

introduced not "assistance" but an actual provincial old age pension of its own. No other province has done this. It amounts to \$25 a month. I am not going to say what will happen to that, but my complaint here is that there is not a tittle of evidence—and the Minister, when he was asked, was not able to give any—that the Government had said to the provinces: "Now, what will you do? Will you give us your assurance that you will not use the increase offered to our senior citizens here as an excuse for cutting them off from other assistance?" Many of these other assistance plans are tied also to free medical and other health services, and if there is a cut-off then those free services go as well. I am not saying that these provincial governments are going to do this, but even if they do not surely this legislation limits the benefits they are now paying. They are not going to increase these benefits.

The honourable Leader of the Government asked if I was thinking of British Columbia. I have before me, for example, a document entitled "Guide to Legislation and Services Related to the Wellbeing of Older People in Ontario", published by the Ontario Society of Aging. I must admit it is two or three years out of date but as I look through this long list of assistance legislation I find over and over again a ceiling. A ceiling is to be found in the Disabled Persons Act, the Blind Persons Act, and even in the War Veterans' Allowance Act, and there are others. This situation applies in every province, and I am concerned at the failure of the government to go to the provinces and obtain some kind of assurance—

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Why?

Hon. Mr. Grosart: Is the honourable Leader of the Government asking me why the Government should obtain assurance from the provinces, or why I am concerned?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Why should the Government do this? The provinces have jurisdiction just as the federal Government has jurisdiction to operate in this field. Why should the federal Government attempt to dictate to the provinces as to what they should do?

Hon. Mr. Grosart: Of course, I made no suggestion that the federal Government should dictate to the provinces or attempt to dictate to them. I merely suggested the application of some co-operative federalism, which has become a sort of motto of this Government. The Government has gone to the