

Old Age Security

with a matter which has already been resolved, and that, of course, is correct. Then you mentioned the amendment that was moved by me last January 20. That amendment is to be found on page 58 of *Hansard* and reads as follows:

I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Monteith) that the following words be added to the address:

We respectfully regret that Your Excellency's advisers have omitted to provide for an immediate increase from \$65 per month to \$100 per month for all recipients under the Old Age Security Act.

That was a very definite and specific amendment setting forth the amount of the increase, with no additional terms included therein.

Today, we move that consideration be given to granting an immediate increase to all those in receipt of old age pensions without the imposition of a means test, or a needs test, or requiring any disclosure of income or financial resources. If the restrictive rule is applied that nothing which has been dealt with even indirectly would ever be referred to again, then the house would be hamstrung by its own rules. However, I have never known the rules to be so applied. To do so would be a denial of the right of the opposition to place before the government by amendment a matter of importance to the people of this nation as a whole. Nothing has received more general support than the need of action in this regard.

Of course, Your Honour did not refer to a resolution that is on the order paper, but the amendment that we have moved in no way contravenes, invades or impedes the resolution moved by the government.

It reads as follows:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Old Age Security Act, effective with respect to months beginning with January, 1967, to provide for the payment out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and for the charging to the Old Age Security Fund under that Act of a monthly amount, to be known as the guaranteed income supplement, to certain pensioners thereunder up to a maximum of 40 per cent of the amount of the pension payable under that Act; to provide for the determination of the income of a pensioner for the purposes of such supplement and for appeals by pensioners against decisions or determinations made under that Act; and to provide for other related and consequential matters.

This is a very lengthy resolution. It is obvious that it has been prepared with unusual care so as to reveal nothing and conceal everything that is in the government's mind.

23033—641½

● (3:40 p.m.)

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in so far as that resolution is concerned, there can be no question that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Grey-Bruce can in any way be ruled out of order because of an existing resolution moved by the government.

My submission, Mr. Speaker, is very short. Personally, I do not often argue a case with the same certainty that I argue this one. I cannot believe that this amendment as moved can be construed in any way as a contravention of the general rule to which you have referred. We are asking that the government give consideration to something which is demanded in all parts of the country, and it will be no answer to say that it could have been given consideration had the matter only been received by Mr. Speaker.

We are asking the government that consideration be given to granting an immediate increase in the pension—amount is in no way referred to—without the imposition of a means test or a needs test or requiring any disclosure of income or financial resources. I can think of no amendment which could be moved that would more completely fall within the rules, however embarrassing it may be to the government. This amendment represents a desire on the part of Her Majesty's opposition to bring parliament face to face with a matter that has not been dealt with before, and which is generally supported in all parts of this country.

The question which is asked over and over again is: Why do you in the opposition not ascertain the view of the House of Commons on this matter? Why is no action taken? The excuse that the government will raise, that it contravenes the rules, is one that I say without fear of contradiction can be advanced only because of the trepidation felt among those in the government ranks about facing up to a situation that is unjust and unfair to the old age pensioners of Canada.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, it strikes me that the hon. member for Grey-Bruce has worded his amendment with particular care. I congratulate him on his wording, for it seems to me that he has looked at what has already taken place in the course of this session, that he has looked at the rules, and that he has tried to draft an amendment on this subject that will be in order.

Mr. McCleave: He wants to take care of the old folk; that is what he wants to do.