

Interim Supply

can, I see no reason why we could not have the assurance that the effective date of this \$10 increase would be within a few days or a few weeks at the most after the legislation has been approved. If we could have that kind of assurance, I can assure the government it will have the co-operation of the house in getting the legislation through in the shortest possible time.

The government may contend that there has to be some relationship between the starting date of the \$10 increase and the starting date of collections under the contributory feature of the new plan. The government has already indicated the \$10 increase to this old age security pension is going to be paid prior to the date when the contributions start. In other words, some means of financing that advance payment is in the mind of the government. If that is the case, we see no reason why that period cannot be extended so that this \$10 increase can be made effective much earlier than is in prospect at the present time.

People are interested in the idea that some time before long we will have in this country a pension system that will make it possible for people generally to have \$150 or \$175 a month as a pension out of the Canada pension plan and old age security. This is going to be possible only for people who retire in 1975. This is not much help to people who are old age pensioners at the present time and are being asked to wait another three or six months before they get this \$10 increase. I think that even tonight the Prime Minister should make a definite statement to this house and tell us the earliest possible date at which that increase could be made effective. I am sure all members of all parties in the house would back up my statement that if we could have the assurance that an increase will be made effective at an early date, the government will have the co-operation of the house in getting that legislation through very quickly after we come back. As a matter of fact, if it would assist in getting this pension started at an early date, I can tell the Prime Minister that we in this party would be glad to come back earlier than September 30, the date that has been suggested.

There are other things about this portion of the session to which I might refer. However, I would rather pinpoint my remarks on this one subject. To me, this is the most disappointing feature of these 56 days of this session, that we have not received a definite decision from the government as to when that \$10 increase is going to start. We have done some other things that were good. We have done some things about which there will be a lot of discussion. I still think we owe it

to the old people of this country to tell them when that increase is going to be effective, and to let them know it will be soon.

(Translation):

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Chairman, the interim supply which we are now considering gives me the opportunity to make a few remarks that I wanted to make a little while ago when the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Sharp) made his statement concerning the wheat sales to communist China.

We have listened with great interest to the minister's statement and we welcome this piece of news. This sale will not only be advantageous to the farmers of western Canada but will profit as well the eastern farmers. The well-being of both, either of the east or of the west, is closely related. When western farmers are happy, eastern farmers are happy also.

However, in the course of his statement, the minister mentioned, if I remember well, readjustments which are necessary concerning the import of textiles.

Coming as I do from one of the most important centres of the textile industry in the province of Quebec, I cannot help but take this opportunity to say a few words. In fact, it seems to me that my electors would be vexed with me if I did not ask the minister in their name to do everything he can to protect our textile industry.

As the hon. gentleman and his parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Drummond-Arthabasca (Mr. Pepin) probably know, the textile industry is the backbone of many of our towns and municipalities. As a matter of fact, for a great many towns and villages in my area, the textile industry is the main activity.

Unless the minister, in the dealings with communist China, pays special attention to this very important industry of ours, the result could be more unemployment for employees who spent the major part of their life in that industry.

So, on behalf of employees of the textile industry in St. Hyacinthe and other cities or communities where this industry is the main livelihood of people, I ask the minister to pay special attention to that question, in order to preserve the livelihood of our people. And I am confident, knowing the sincerity of the minister, that he will want to act on my recommendations.