

not give one cent more than 50 per cent. The provinces can take it or leave it. That represents the extent to which the government is prepared to go in granting relief to the aged. Judging from the contributions that have been made by my own county to the support of the poor there, I am sure that \$20 a month will be inadequate. The government might very well pay a larger percentage of the cost, and in doing so they would encourage the provinces to coöperate, not only in passing legislation, but perhaps in adding to the allowance, so as to make it possible for the old people to live.

Mr. ROBB: My hon. friend has given evidence of a short memory. He and his followers—because it is not so long since he was a member of a government—less than forty-eight hours ago applauded the leader of the opposition (Mr. Guthrie) when he attacked this government for adding to the public expenditure and urged greater economy. My hon. friend has no longer the responsibility of office and can therefore be generous with the funds of the people. I am interested to know whether he is speaking for the whole Conservative party in this regard?

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): I am not obliged to give utterance to the sentiments of other people; I speak for myself. I can however suggest ways whereby the minister can raise money.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

After Recess

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: When the committee rose we were considering section 3—agreements with provinces.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Up to now I have refrained from speaking on this bill this session. But last year it was my pleasure and honour to pilot the bill through this House. It received the unanimous endorsement of the House and then went to the upper chamber. That chamber did not see fit to accept the bill as passed by the Commons. It failed to pass the upper house, but since then the legislation has been before the electorate of Canada and the people have endorsed it. That has been shown by the return of the party which instituted and brought that legislation into this House.

I do not think the discussion on this occasion has been much wider in its nature than the one which took place last year. It is true that hon. gentlemen opposite, knowing the popular demand for this measure, are more

[Mr. J. W. Edwards.]

anxious now to see that some form of legislation is put into effect. We find to-day an almost unanimous sentiment in its favour. Of course we have not heard yet from those who opposed the bill last year—and there were several—but we find an almost unanimous sentiment in this chamber in favour of old age pensions, and we also find those who are not responsible for the expenditure of the taxes collected from the people of Canada proposing to-day that the scope of the bill should be extended and further obligations undertaken by the Dominion. That seems to be the desire of hon. gentlemen opposite. Well, that is not a difficult thing to do; it is easy for hon. gentlemen opposite, who are not responsible for the expenditure of public money, to suggest that the scope of the bill should be widened. Personally I heartily endorse the principle of old age pensions, and I wish to point out that last year was the first occasion when a government of Canada undertook to bring in legislation dealing with this important question.

Mr. HEAPS: May I ask the minister a question?

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Not just now; I prefer to continue my argument. To my mind the primary necessity at the present time is to have the principle of old age pensions endorsed by this parliament. But I can easily see that if the suggestions referred to, in view of the quarter whence they emanate, were accepted by the government the old age pensions scheme would be defeated in Canada for the present. I make that statement after mature consideration, and I hope that those who are in favour of old age pensions, if they mean what they say, will accept the present bill in order to have the principle which it embodies established in this country.

We reviewed last year the countries which had accepted the principle of old age pensions, and we were able to show that Great Britain had led in this matter. But from time to time even Great Britain revised and amended her legislation, and finally arrived at the place where they now have a dual system, one part of which is contributory and the other supported by the government. It would be very satisfactory if we could arrive immediately at the condition Great Britain has developed in her years of progress and legislative experience, but this is entirely a new undertaking as far as Canada is concerned.

As I said a moment ago, generally speaking this proposal has been endorsed by the electorate throughout Canada, and it is a well known fact that the sentiment in Canada is that the aged who have failed to provide for