

Canada Assistance Plan

On this point, Mr. Speaker, I am completely in agreement with the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) that is it not, in any way, the same decision we have to make.

In January it was a non-confidence motion introduced by the Leader of the Opposition. It was a non-confidence motion because such a measure had not been taken.

For a week, we were repeatedly told by the members on the government side that the issue involved was a question of non-confidence and not a question of increasing old age pensions.

When we told the members of the government: You will be voting against old age pensions, they replied: No, we will be voting confidence in our government.

That is what the members of the government were suggesting in January. We did not quite believe them and we voted for the motion, thinking it was a vote to increase old age pensions.

Today, we are told that it is not so. We are told just the opposite of what we were being told at that time. At the time, the motion was, in fact, written in such a way as to express non-confidence in the government because the old age pensions had not been increased.

Today, the amendment is asking rather that the bill be not read now for a second time but be referred to the committee in order to include in the bill an increase in the old age pension, which is quite another thing.

We are not asked to vote on the same thing at all, the wording is not the same. First, the text is not written in identical words or sentences. Second, there was in the first motion an idea of lack of confidence which is not found in the present motion. You will admit it.

There was not, in the first motion, that idea of increasing the old age pension, whereas there is in the second amendment that idea of introducing a bill to increase family allowances. Therefore, we are not asked to vote on the same thing at all.

Second, the Minister of National Health and Welfare tells us that the amendment does not agree with the principle of the bill now under consideration. But, in that regard, I am in full agreement with what the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre said to the effect that the amendment is directly related to the bill which we are now studying.

[Mr. Grégoire.]

The old age pension, Mr. Speaker, is a social security measure and what we are studying now is a series of social security measures.

Some are related to social welfare itself, social welfare services, general assistance, the blind, the needy mothers, the disabled. There are, in the same bill, other clauses which deal with social welfare for Indians. Others in Part III are related to work activity projects.

It is therefore a bill which includes a group of social security measures. Well, increasing the old age pension is also a social security measure. It is directly related to the bill now under consideration.

For those reasons, I think that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is quite in order. There is no doubt at all in my mind, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment is acceptable and I have not heard from the Minister of Transport or the Minister of National Health and Welfare a single valid argument to the effect that it is not.

However, as I said at the beginning, I heard a valid argument from the Minister of Transport to the effect that if the amendment is passed, the bill might be postponed indefinitely, but that argument has nothing to do with the amendment being in order or out of order.

When the time comes to decide whether the bill should be given the six months' hoist because the amendment has been passed, we may then change our minds, because we do not want that bill postponed indefinitely, we do not want it to be shelved. On the contrary, we want it passed, preferably with an increase in the old age pension, for that increase has been discussed for a long time. We want the bill passed with the increase, but if the Minister of Transport manages to convince us that by accepting the amendment the bill is killed, then we shall vote otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, without a doubt the amendment is in order; the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the Minister of Transport have not argued that the bill would be out of order.

● (4:20 p.m.)

[*English*]

Mr. Turner: I should like to speak to the point of order, beginning with the argument