

wife so that she can apply for assistance from either the municipality or the provincial government. This reminds me of a story about a gentleman whose wife was terminally ill. He did not have enough money to pay the hospital bill or to buy drugs. But if she were living on welfare the drugs and hospital bills would be looked after. While she is dying of a terminal disease, he has to go to court to obtain special permission to divorce her so that she can be looked after in hospital. I do not know whether this happened in Canada, but the situation here is almost that bad.

I suggest that all hon. members know this problem. It is a problem which affects all of us. We receive letters from people saying they are trying to get along on one old age pension and one guaranteed income supplement. These people have no other income. Something should be done about this problem. We in this House should be ashamed of ourselves when we become involved in passing a bill to provide an old age pensioner with an additional \$13.39 without considering some of the other problems which are immediate and affect a large number of our senior citizens.

We have not given any consideration to the question of rent control or shelter control for the elderly people. Many of them will find that the \$13.39 will never accrue to them but will in fact go to the landlords who are collecting the rent. We have not given consideration to rent control or shelter control for the elderly people and many of them will find that the \$13.39 will never accrue to them but will, in fact, go to the landlords who collect the rent.

• (2250)

Finally, I presume you, Mr. Speaker, will have to rule the amendment that is now before us out of order because of our rules. I do not intend to delay this bill, Mr. Speaker, because I am aware that the needs of our senior citizens are great and that this House must give consideration to the problem that is now developing. We are finding that more and more people working in our factories are living in a world of fantasy. They work every day thinking of the tourist camp they are going to buy or of the boat they are going to build in order to travel around the world. Their fantasy about retirement, however, never materializes. I think it is our responsibility to assist those who are about to retire and we should start fairly early, prior to their retirement. We should build for them an educational system which will enable them to cope with unemployment rather than to live in the fantasy which will obviously never materialize. The fact that so many of the people who retire live only a short period of time thereafter indicates their great need.

I hope that this House does continue sitting for some time, especially if I were sure that the Minister of National Health and Welfare would give some consideration to these serious problems that have been raised tonight and that have met with obstacles from our rules. There are immediate problems that are known to each member here and I doubt if any of us, in all conscience, can accept the pittance that is being offered without giving some consideration in the near future to the other problems that are just as immediate and just as important for a large segment of our senior citizen population in this nation.

Old Age Security Act

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, apparently there is disposition to finish this important item, and I am wondering if we could make a deal with those who feel they have to make a contribution at this late hour to cut their speeches to a bare minimum. We are worrying about the old people, but we should show some concern for our staff also.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Perhaps I should have allowed the hon. member to make his point of order after I had read my decision on the point raised earlier this evening, otherwise I might fall into the category which draws his concern.

Earlier this evening the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) presented an amendment, and I will now make my ruling upon it. I wish to thank the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) and the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Reid) for their assistance to the Chair on the question that has given me considerable difficulty.

The bill before us contains a simple provision. It deals with the basic amount of pension under the provisions of the Old Age Security Act. It does seem to me that little in the bill goes beyond that point. I ask myself: what would the amendment do? I suggest that it proposes that a committee of the House consider the qualifications for a pension payable under the Old Age Security Act. The motion does not say that the amount of the pension should be altered. But the hon. member for Shefford in his amendment does propose the study of the conditions by which a person becomes eligible for the pension. It does seem to me that he is endeavouring to reach in behind the bill now before us for the purpose of amending the enabling legislation. Otherwise, for what purpose would the committee consider the formula? In doing so, his proposal is not really relevant to the provision in the bill before us, and it is a fundamental rule that the amendment must be relevant to the question.

I can understand his zeal in endeavouring to make a change in an important measure. However, as a servant of the House I can only deal with any question in accordance with what I believe to be the strictures laid down for the guidance of the Chair.

May I draw the attention of hon. members to part of citation 418 in Beauchesne's Fourth Edition. I read the second sentence which is as follows:

All amendments which may be moved on a second reading of a bill may be moved on the third reading with the restriction that they cannot deal with any matter which is not contained in the bill.

I re-emphasize that in my opinion the amendment is not relevant, but it is close to the line, and that has given me difficulty in deciding. With regret, I cannot put the amendment to the House.

Some hon. Members: Question.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I wish to express my opinion which is shared by almost all Canadians as regards the bill before us, Bill C-147, an Act to amend the Old Age Security Act.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is mainly designed to increase the basic old age security pension to a maximum of \$100 a month.