

once and for all his promise to increase allowances to old people to \$105 per month. That day I think that all the old people of Canada will thank the minister because, since the last elections especially, that has been promised them in all the ridings and they are waiting anxiously for the promise to be fulfilled.

[English]

**Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley):** Mr. Speaker, we wish to join in the expressions of appreciation to the minister for bringing this announcement before the house at the present time. It will do much to reassure those who have been wondering just what if anything is being done in regard to the increasing of disability pensions and war veterans allowances. Even though we agree that they are far from adequate, we appreciate the announcement that has been made at the present time. We look upon it as an interim proposition, and trust that when the final legislation is introduced and decisions are made it will go much further in meeting the needs of those who are so desperately in need at the present time.

There is one matter I should like to re-emphasize, and that is the matter of permissive income. I expect all hon. members have received letters from pensioners. I know I have received a number. They ask why it is that when the wife becomes eligible for the old age pension that amount is to be deducted from the veteran's pension. They do not understand why they should be in a position where they have to pay for their wives' old age pensions. This is something which I think should be considered very carefully. We look upon the old age pension as something that is universal in its application. These people should not be placed in the position where they are forced to pay their spouses' counter-pension out of their veterans allowances and pensions.

#### THE LATE MRS. LOUIS S. ST. LAURENT

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the house will permit me to express on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and I am sure on behalf of all members of the house, the deep sympathy we have for Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent and the members of his family over the passing of a beloved wife and mother. Madame St. Laurent was a woman of great charm, with a deep sense of kindness and with a recognition that while political parties are separated friendship is not circumscribed.

#### *The Late Mrs. Louis S. St. Laurent*

Personally I had a very deep affection for Madame St. Laurent. I met her first more than 30 years ago when her husband was president of the Canadian Bar Association. Through the intervening years that friendship continued unabated. The uncertainties of political warfare within the House of Commons never interfered with her personal friendship. I speak with considerable emotion when I say I am personally deeply saddened that she has passed on to her reward.

To her husband and the members of her family I would ask you, sir, to convey the heartfelt condolences not only of the members of the house as a whole but particularly of those who knew her during the years her husband was in public life, and before.

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the house appreciate very greatly what the right hon. gentleman has said. I am sure Mr. St. Laurent and members of the family will be deeply moved by his words and the expression of sympathy on his part and on the part I think of all members of the house in the loss of Mrs. St. Laurent. She was a gracious and very warm-hearted lady. Those who knew her were very fond of her indeed. She was a lady whose life perhaps centred more in her family and in her home than in public affairs; but perhaps she was none the worse for that.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that the grief which is felt by Mr. St. Laurent and the members of the family at this sad time will be alleviated by the expression of sympathy my right hon. friend has so eloquently expressed on behalf of all members of the house.

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, the members of our party would like to associate ourselves with the appropriate words expressed by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition and by the right hon. Prime Minister. We too should like to express our sympathy to the former prime minister, Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, and the members of his family, at the sad passing of Mrs. St. Laurent. Those of us who were privileged to know her found her to be a gracious and charming lady. We know how deeply devoted she and Mr. St. Laurent were to each other, and what a sad blow this will be to him. It is our hope that it will be of some comfort to him and the members of his family to know that his friends in the House of Commons are thinking of them at this time, and that they have our deepest sympathy in their time of grief.