

Supply—Health and Welfare

to have accommodation at a reasonable price, one would take a trailer, or upon arrival rent a cheap apartment.

This gives tremendous relief to these sufferers. I have seen people in Florida suffering so badly from rheumatism that they had to be carried down to the sea, but within six months they have been able to walk. They are carried out into the sea and move about in the waves. This helps them to manipulate their legs and, after a month or two, they are in much better health.

And it is not only those who suffer from rheumatism or arthritis. Some of the older people who are getting a little stiff in their joints—in fact, I feel like that myself after being down here in this climate and sitting in these seats for so long—would like to go down there and have the benefit of the sea.

Mr. Martin: We shall end up with you if you do not hurry along.

Mr. Quelch: We shall all be there, if we sit here long enough. Why penalize these people by not allowing them to have their pensions? The hon. member for Macleod has pointed out that they are contributing to pensions.

Mr. Martin: I have listened to these two full, thorough and very interesting speeches, and I shall give them very careful study.

Mr. Knight: I should like to ask the minister two definite questions which I expect him to answer, despite the fact that apparently he is in a hurry.

Mr. Martin: No.

Mr. Knight: It is true that a change of environment is often useful in the treatment of rheumatism and asthma. I cannot see any reason why some old chap who is troubled with asthma in certain climatic conditions, and whose condition would be modified or cured under other conditions, should be refused permission to go outside the country.

There is another thing, and this argument has become more convincing because in the old days, when pensions were enjoyed only by those having very small incomes, it was almost certain that those people could not go to other places. But since payments are now made, irrespective of a person's financial position, and the pension is paid as of right, more people would like to travel or would be able to travel.

I would ask the minister this question. Is any special consideration now given to anyone on the basis of invalidism to allow him to leave the country and still draw his pension? If so, about how many have that privilege?

[Mr. Quelch.]

The second question is this. I would ask the minister for a restatement of the economic considerations which induce the Canadian government to say it is impossible to pay pensions to people outside the country. These may be people who have resided here for 70 years. They have borne burdens in this country and should be given consideration. These are two clear questions to which I would ask for answers.

An hon. Member: Carried.

Mr. Knight: No, it is not carried. Is the minister going to answer?

Mr. Martin: The answer to the first question is no. The answer to the second question is that first of all there is the difficulty of administration. We anticipate it would cost at least \$10 million on the basis of applications we have already had. I know there are individual cases; indeed there is one right in this House of Commons, though not at this moment. We all know that case. But we have to take into consideration the general obligations of administration. And there is the further fact that in my judgment, and I am sure in the judgment of most people, it would not look good—

Mr. Knight: "Well".

Mr. Martin: —to give special consideration to people who are going to live in Florida. I do not say that because I have any objection to going to Florida, because I have been there myself. But I am just saying that it does not look good. Then, as the hon. member for Macleod said, this is a scheme based in part upon a contributory principle. That principle of contribution continues while the recipient is in benefit. The old age security pensioner, while he is receiving his pension, is actually continuing to pay toward it through the sales tax.

Mr. Quelch: We hope you will abolish that sales tax.

Mr. Martin: That is another matter. So those are the reasons for the policy I have mentioned.

Mr. Knight: The minister's last argument is perhaps a valid one, that the pensioner would be contributing toward his own pension. But I am not so sure about the vague—and we shall not discuss it from the standpoint of grammar—statement of the minister, when he said it would not look good. I am not interested in things simply because they do not look good—or well. The minister says something would not look good, but I would like to have a better reason than that.

Mr. Martin: That was only an incidental reason.