

than later when the new stabilization program comes in there will be an additional \$100 million transferred into the wheat economy.

PENSIONS—OLD AGE SECURITY—ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RETURN OF BASIC INCREASE BY CERTAIN PENSIONERS—USE MADE OF MONEY

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I put a question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) regarding old age pensioners who are sending in contributions of 42 cents, this being the figure by which the basic amount of the old age security pension was increased in January. I asked this question because I felt that old age pensioners who are making this gesture should be assured that their contributions will be acknowledged, and also because I felt that these pensioners had the right to know to what use their money is being put.

I confess I was quite surprised when the Minister of Finance in his reply indicated that he had received three of these contributions, and I took it that he meant he had received only three. This led me to a quick check of my own files this afternoon and I found that I have had seven letters from individuals who have told me that they sent 42-cent contributions to the government. Let it be clear that although most of them were sent to the Minister of Finance, in a couple of cases they went to the minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) and to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

• (10:20 p.m.)

In addition to these seven I have before me a couple of letters to the editors of newspapers. One is from L. Wright to the Editor of the *Toronto Telegram* and the other from C. G. Stockley to the *Winnipeg Tribune*. They indicate that they sent 42 cents either to the Minister of Finance or the Prime Minister. That adds up to nine.

The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) indicated in the House a few days ago that he had received one of these 42-cent contributions and I understand that he transmitted it to the Minister of Finance. That makes ten. Some days ago the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) told me that he had received two of these contributions and had sent them to the Minister of Finance. That adds up to 12 within my direct knowledge. That is why I was surprised at the statement of the Minister of Finance this afternoon to the effect that he had received only three. I hope that the parliamentary secretary who is representing the minister tonight will have this matter checked. I have quoted only cases which I can document, but from the letters I am receiving and the cases I read about in the newspapers it strikes me that a great many of our pensioners are participating in this attempt to help the government out by providing it with these 42-cent contributions.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that I have before me tonight some additional contributions. The last questioner raised a matter that would cost the government money, and we are often asked where the money is coming from for projects which we advocate. I have some

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of it here tonight. I have a Canadian postal order for 42 cents made out to Mr. Edgar Benson from Mr. George Anderson of Suite 11, 220 Jamison Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Manitoba. In his letter he suggested that I transmit this postal order to the Minister of Finance and that if the minister needed it for pipe tobacco he could use it for that purpose. I have two envelopes each containing 42 cents in cash—at least it says so on the outside but I have not opened them. They were sent in by Mr. J. Drinkwater of Suite 1, 239 Victoria Street, Kamloops, B.C. These contributions have come directly to me with the request that I transmit them to the Minister of Finance.

In addition, I have a cheque which was sent to the hon. member for Surrey (Mr. Mather). It comes from Mrs. Mabel A. Hamilton of North Surrey, B.C., and is a cheque on her savings account for 42 cents made out to "Someone in need, care of Prime Minister P. E. Trudeau". Finally, in addition to the 42-cent contribution which the hon. member for Kootenay West sent in the other day I have another which he received since and which he asked me to present tonight. It is from Mr. Edward Hall of 1827 - 5th Avenue, Trail, B.C., and it consists of four dimes and two pennies scotch-taped to a card. It is addressed to "Scrooge and misers Benson and Trudeau from an old age pensioner and also a veteran from the First World War."

Mr. Speaker, here are five more of these contributions, and they add up to \$2.10—quite a boost to the government. Perhaps the chief page would be good enough to take these across to the parliamentary secretary, together with a list of the donors and their names and addresses so that these contributions can be properly acknowledged. I hope that a record will be kept of them. This afternoon the Minister of Finance said that he was sending them to the Receiver General of Canada. He may have to open a special account and may even have to come back to Parliament for guidance as to what is to be done with the money.

At any rate, in addition to receiving this money from these people and confirming the assurance that they will be acknowledged, I hope the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Mahoney) will convey to his minister and the government the motive behind this gesture on the part of these people. The plain fact of the matter is they, and many thousands of our senior citizens, feel insulted by such a small increase at a time when the basic amount of the old age pension ought to be increased substantially.

We have been debating today a motion in which there was the phrase that the government "has humiliated the disadvantaged." It is bad enough to be hard up or disadvantaged. It is even worse to have humiliation added to it. That is what these retired people feel about a basic increase in the old age pension of only 42 cents.

**Mr. P. M. Mahoney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) has had the opportunity to look further into this matter since the question was posed this afternoon. There have indeed been a number of payments of the