

question posed by the hon. member, that member then has the floor. The hon. member for Ottawa West cannot force an hon. member to limit his remarks to a yes or no answer. It is very difficult for the Chair, because when recognizing a member the Chair must allow him to speak for 20 minutes to complete his remarks, and at that time advise him that his time has expired. Then the hon. member can seek the floor again.

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I can understand the hon. member wanting to prevent me from quoting the figures that the Conservative government of Ontario has adopted under social assistance. I thank you for allowing me to complete my remarks.

The social assistance figure for Ontario, as checked this morning with Toronto—I remind hon. members that Ontario is the richest province in Canada, and certainly that government cannot plead that it cannot get more funds—for a couple is \$246.75 per month, or a total of \$2,900.61 per year. This is over \$1,200 less being paid by the Ontario government than what is now proposed.

In respect of the matter mentioned by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona covering the disabled, the handicapped and people under 65 years of age who are really in need, perhaps I could give the figures for Alberta, at least for the edification of the hon. member. The figure is \$244 for a couple in Alberta.

Mr. Stackhouse: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member keeps referring to myself as the member for Edmonton-Strathcona. I am the member for Scarborough East. This indicates two things to me: first, he knows very little about the west; secondly, his knowledge of geography is as impoverished as his knowledge of social needs.

Mr. Lalonde: I apologize to the hon. member and I hope he is not taking the attribution of this particular riding as an insult.

● (2130)

Mr. Yewchuk: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister would kindly quote the same figures for the Liberal governments of P.E.I. and Nova Scotia?

Mr. Lalonde: I do not have those figures right now but I can tell the hon. member that out of their provincial income those provinces are contributing more to social assistance than the provinces of Ontario and Alberta.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I now have those figures. They are published in a very good document that I recommend to the hon. member entitled "Working Paper on Social Security in Canada," tabled in this House last April. Table 8 in annexed page 53 shows that in P.E.I. the figure in April was \$2,188. There may have been an increase in the meantime. I do not have the exact up to date figure, but that is poor little P.E.I. for you. If you look at the expenditure in terms of percentage of personal income, P.E.I. is contributing to social assistance 3.4 per cent of its personal provincial income, while the great big generous government of Ontario is contributing 1.4 per cent.

Old Age Security

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Yewchuk: That is a pretty poor excuse.

Mr. Lalonde: If you look at Table 7 on page 52 of the booklet in question, you will find that the two provinces—

Mr. Reilly: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the query is merely whether the minister believes that the amount in question is enough to live on. I do not think this calls for a lengthy, impassioned peroration on the crimes of the government of Ontario. I am not here to apologize for the government of Ontario; I am here to attack him and his colleagues.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member would not wish the Chair to intervene between two hon. members in a debate or to give direction to an hon. member as to what he should say or should not say in his speech as long he follows the rules and the practices of the House. The minister has been allowed the floor by the hon. member for Ottawa West—

Mr. Reilly: For the purpose of answering a question.

The Deputy Chairman:—and it is impossible for the Chair to remove the floor from the minister unless he has completed his 20 minutes.

Mr. Lalonde: I will leave hon. members to guess which of the two provinces in Canada give the smallest percentage of their personal income to social assistance. These are the two provinces under the leadership of Conservative governments, Ontario and Alberta, with respectively 1.4 per cent and 1.7 per cent.

Mr. Yewchuk: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, all the minister has done is indicate that the very good governments of those two provinces, which happen to be the richest provinces, have most of their people working, and they do not need to pay so much.

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Chairman—

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The Chair asks the co-operation of hon. members. If we are going to use points of order to ask questions and to give hon. members' opinions, the committee will not progress. I would invite the minister, if he has not completed his remarks, to do so and the Chair will then return to the hon. member for Ottawa West.

Mr. Lalonde: I just want to say, in conclusion, that I am sorry the hon. member who has just spoken apparently is satisfied with the levels being paid for social assistance in the two provinces to which reference has been made.

Mr. Reilly: Mr. Chairman, I got no answer to the question I asked, but I really did not expect one anyway. There are many deficiencies in the manner in which all governments perform. As I said before, I am not here to deliver an apology for the government of Ontario. I am here to try to talk some sense to this government.

Mr. Yewchuk: An impossible task.