

was left struggling, with my wife and three children but I managed. I lost my wife 22 years ago and my older daughter 12 years ago, and I am going to be 91 next month so what can I do? I worked till last year, selling textiles to coat and suit and dress manufacturers, but I cannot walk much. I used to walk ten miles a day.

I hope you can do something for us.

I make no apology for reading these letters, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) could read thousands. I am reading a few today because I want the minister to know how these people are faring. Here is another one, from Kingston, Ontario:

My husband and I are old age pensioners, 82 and 76 years old. We are constantly worried about the rising cost of living with the small pensions we have to live on. My husband worked for the Canadian National Railways for 42 years continuous service and his pension has never increased from \$126 since he retired at 65. Due to this pension we each receive the reduced pension of \$79.58. From this monthly income we have to pay \$12.50 a month hospitalization, \$5.90 a month for OHSIP, \$75 a year income tax. Add to this drugs, rent and food. It is impossible to live in a manner which we as Canadian citizens—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order, please. I regret having to interrupt the hon. lady, but if she wishes to continue reading these letters she will have to get unanimous consent.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** May I have just a minute more?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Does the House give consent to the hon. lady to continue?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take just two minutes. I shall omit the rest of that letter because I have one here that is particularly pertinent:

I am a widow, old age pensioner, with a small pension besides and a small \$10 to \$15 to draw on when things get very tight on \$127.26 a month.

Because of the above, I rank with the "haves"; but I wish Mr. Munro, Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Benson would realize that we "haves" have to pay the same for our utilities, telephone, medical plan, not to count prescriptive medicines. Being an arthritic with very bad hips—using a cane—my monthly medicine bill runs around \$12.50 to \$15, so you see we have the same disbursements as the "have nots".

I do hope you will be able to bring these vital points home to officials because I am not the only one to whom the 42 cents is an insult, and the difference is very unfair.

Thank you again.

Here is another one:

I would like you to point out to Mr. Munro, the minister responsible for the paltry raise in the old age pension basic rate, that 42 cents amounts to less than two cents a day over 365 days. Personally, I am in favour of sending the 42 cents back to the government and saying that they must need it to pay the \$35,000 yearly salary of the cabinet ministers.

I have not had time to read the letters from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and other places. I just want to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that in my view the very least we can do to salvage something for the people

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frozen at \$80 is bring back the 2 per cent escalator clause. Are we saving that cost of living feature for the people retired from the civil service, the Canada Pension Plan people, Members of Parliament and a host of others? Why can we not give it to the people who need it so badly, the old age pensioners?

I urge all members to vote for this amendment, but I also urge the government to make the amendment unnecessary by stating that it will change the legislation and bring some small measure of justice to elderly people at this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. Is the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Kaplan) rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Kaplan:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question even though her time has expired.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. Because the time of the hon. lady has expired, this could only be done by unanimous consent of the House. Does the House agree to allow the hon. member for Don Valley to ask a question of the hon. lady?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Kaplan:** Mr. Speaker, I can understand that the names of the authors of these letters should not be put on the record. However, I think it would be interesting to have the name of the voluntary organization referred to which provided dentures for the lady with the abscessed gums.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** Do you know why I do not want to supply that information, though I will give it to the hon. member afterwards? If I were to state the name publicly, there would be such a run on the fund that it would be dry by tomorrow morning.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Any more questions?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Any more abscesses, Don?

**Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North):** Mr. Speaker, before commenting on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), I think it only right and proper to say that while the ladies of Canada have only one representative in the House of Commons, when I hear her make pleas on behalf of worthy causes—and most of her causes are worthy—I feel that she makes up in large part for the lack of female representation. I wonder how many extra days we would be sitting if there were more like her in the House of Commons?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** We would get more done.