

*Old Age Security*

being able to get some member of parliament to take up their case with the minister? Surely the minister can find some better means of serving this purpose than that.

**Mr. Chevrier:** Mr. Speaker, I think I made it clear on an earlier occasion during a discussion of this matter that if any hon. member felt that he or any of his constituents was aggrieved I knew of no other method by which he could dispose of the matter than by taking it up with the responsible minister. Again I offer those circumstances pending the time when I hope it will be possible to find a formula which will meet the position.

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to that asked the Minister of Justice by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. Have the minister and his advisers considered a formula similar to that in effect under the defence of Canada regulations, where a judicial tribunal investigated matters of security to the satisfaction, I believe, of the government at that time?

**Mr. Chevrier:** I can assure my hon. friend that that formula is one of the things we have considered, together with other aspects of the case, including a formula such as that which is prevalent in the United Kingdom at the present time.

### OLD AGE SECURITY

#### PROVISION FOR INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF PAYMENT

The house resumed, from Monday, September 30, consideration in committee of the following resolution—Miss LaMarsh—Mr. Lamoureux in the chair:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Old Age Security Act to increase the pension under the said act from \$65 a month to \$75 a month, effective October 1, 1963, and to increase the rate of old age security tax from the present rate of 3 per cent with a maximum of \$90 to a rate of 4 per cent with a maximum of \$120 on the taxable income of individuals, applicable to the 1964 and subsequent taxation years.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to traverse the ground which was covered by the hon. member for Perth, but there are one or two observations I should like to make with regard to this resolution, which in itself represents a complete about face on the part of the government.

Indeed, it is difficult to understand the attitude taken by the government, particularly when in the month of July a plan was available. The Canada national pension plan was completed, and all that was required was its passage through parliament. Yet in the intervening months things have changed; alterations have taken place in the thinking of the government. That is not new. It is something

[Mr. Douglas.]

we have learned to expect since this government has been in office. The haste which marks the introduction of legislation is equalled only by the lack of repentance consequent upon revision or even withdrawal, in whole or in part, of such legislation. This is just another example. What a sorry mess it has been.

I think one of the most interesting phases in the spectacle had to do with the President of the Privy Council, who made a speech the other day which is reported in *La Presse* of September 28. He requested that France should send some planners to Canada in order to assist the Canadian government, and that Canada in return would send accounting and fiscal experts to France. That, I think, was the capsheaf so far as this government is concerned.

However, I want to make a few references to statements made by the minister of health. They have certainly had the planners here. They have had planners in every direction. They are planning today, and then planning tomorrow to get out of the plans which are today determined upon.

The minister of health and welfare said, as reported on page 3038 of *Hansard*:

You will have realized, Mr. Chairman, that the introduction of this resolution was made both necessary and urgent by recent developments respecting the Canada pension plan. It was originally the government's intention that the \$10 increase in the old age security benefit be paid out of contributions to the Canada pension plan. When this house recessed two months ago, it was still our announced intention to present the necessary legislation at as early a date as possible.

Then, consequent upon the decision of the government of Quebec to forego the Canada pension plan in favour of a contributory plan of its own, it became evident to one and all that the part of the federal plan providing an increase in the flat rate pension had to be separated from the rest of the scheme.

I remember, Mr. Chairman, some of the statements made at that time, and I think they should be recalled. The minister of health and welfare said, as reported on page 2343 of *Hansard*:

While this government is committed to this increased payment at the earliest possible date, it is committed not to pay it out of general revenue but from a flow of contributions under the new contributory pensions scheme.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I am sure almost anyone would find it most difficult to follow the government in its changing attitude and its tortuous courses. I was interested to hear the minister deny today that she had ever made any statement which was adverse to the premier of Quebec. Yet it was reported in all the press on September 28. The storm broke only yesterday or today in *Le Devoir* and some of the other papers in the province of Quebec. What the hon. minister denies having