

*Old Age Pensions*

bill, and up to the present time only one province has approved of it. In the province from which I come I do not think that we are likely to have an old age pension bill put into effect if it is placed on a fifty per cent basis. I am anxious to see the bill go into effect, and that is the only reason I am urging my views upon the House. I think the least the government can do is to allow hon. members to express their opinions through a vote. If the motion cannot be made by a private member, I think one of the ministers should move to reconsider the measure, so that hon. members may have an opportunity of expressing themselves, and I feel sure under those circumstances the House would approve of a larger contribution than is proposed in this particular clause.

Mr. CANNON: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the hon. gentleman, I wish to say that it is not the intention of the government to curtail discussion in any way, but this parliament, like any other parliament, is necessarily managed according to certain well known rules, and according to those rules the motions moved this afternoon are out of order, and have been so declared by you, Sir.

This afternoon we have witnessed an extraordinary spectacle. On the one hand our friends who belong to the Tory party advance certain reasons why we should pay 100 per cent, and on the other our friends who belong to the Alberta party and the Labour party suggest that we should pay 100 per cent but for other reasons. Only a short time ago we had a vote in this House. The Tory party voted against the government because we had not reduced taxation sufficiently, and the Alberta Progressives voted against the government because we had not lowered the tariff sufficiently. Suppose we accept the suggestion made this afternoon, we would increase the obligations of the federal exchequer. Where would we get the money to meet them? Will the gentleman who are sitting opposite me contend, on the one hand, that we should increase the obligations of the federal treasury and, on the other, reduce taxation?

Mr. HEAPS: I suggested this afternoon that if the 10 per cent had not been taken off the income tax there would be ample funds to pay old age pensions.

Mr. CANNON: Exactly; and my hon. friend voted against the government because the cost of living had not been decreased—the tariff had not been reduced. How can we lower the tariff, thus reducing our revenues, and at the same time assume larger obligations? That is ordinary common sense.

[Mr. Heaps.]

How can this government pay millions of dollars to the people on the one hand, and on the other reduce the national revenues?

Mr. MANION: I thought the hon. minister and his party stated throughout the general election that by lowering the tariff they had improved the industrial situation throughout the country and increased the national prosperity.

Mr. CANNON: There is no doubt about that, but that is one angle of the question which I can discuss with my hon. friend on another occasion. What I want to make as clear as possible this afternoon is that we are asked to assume under this bill a larger liability, and we are asked to do so by two parties, one of which is insisting that we reduce taxation, and the other that we reduce the tariff. I say there is no logic in that attitude.

The opponents of this bill apparently are not voicing the interests of the federal government or of Canada as a whole, but the interests of the provinces. This is a federal parliament. Let us look after the interests of the Dominion as a whole. The hon. gentleman from British Columbia who spoke this afternoon asked me to express my views as to whether Quebec was willing to assume her liability under this project, amounting in his estimation to about \$3,000,000 annually. I may say that the province of Quebec is spending vast sums of money to look after the very people for whom we are providing under this scheme. It will be for the provincial government to decide whether or not it will share in this scheme. If Quebec wishes to stay aloof, she has a perfect right to do so. But so far as I am concerned, I am not speaking here solely as a representative of Quebec, I am speaking as a representative of Canada. We will contribute to any social legislation, but within our means. An hon. gentleman from Nova Scotia, an experienced business man, told us that we should give everything that his province is asking for in the way of maritime rights, but that Nova Scotia is not willing to do anything to promote this social legislation.

Mr. CANTLEY: I did not say anything of the kind. I said we could not afford to. I said further that you could not put the bill into effect without compelling us to pay as taxes pensions to people in other provinces better able than we are to bear the burden.

Mr. CANNON: The stand I take, and I think it will be approved by the majority of the committee, is that as members of the