

Columbia they demand a statement from a woman's son-in-law. The Parents' Maintenance Act provides that children must support their parents, but it says nothing about sons-in-law supporting mothers-in-law; and yet there must be the most intricate statements as to what the income of the son-in-law is for a whole year and three months separately as well. Affidavits must be obtained from employers, all of this being embarrassing and occasioning delay. There are a number of instances like this in which there is neither British nor any other kind of justice, and I think the dominion government should formulate regulations and compel the various provinces to adhere to them.

I heard a demand made this afternoon for a reduction in the age limit, and in the same breath the gentleman who made that demand stated that it was imperative that the pension should also be increased. That is a popular declaration among a certain number of poor people who think only of their own interest and cannot see a yard in front of them. But a member of the house who puts up that argument, asking for an impossibility of that kind, with the sure and certain knowledge that the dominion government must turn it down, so that he can go back to the country cherishing and brandishing this grievance and saying, "There is your government for you; they turned it down"—either that member is doing it deliberately or he is acknowledging that he is not fit for the position of statesman in Canada to which we all would aspire, and he has no sense of his responsibility beyond the interests of his own particular parish. We all know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) cannot do that; he cannot reduce the age limit and at the same time increase the pension.

I would suggest two things: first, make pension regulations more reasonable and so inform the boards. I recall, when the present leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) was on the government benches, we brought up some question in connection with soldiers' pensions. He admitted that there was an injustice and he said it would be remedied. Months later we asked whether he was going to bring in legislation to deal with it, and he said in his brusque way, "No; I have looked into the matter and all that is needed is a common sense interpretation of the military regulations. I have had a word with the chairman of the board and there will be no more trouble." And there was not. That is all I ask the minister to do. Tell these boards that while they are there to see that no one gets a pension to which he is not entitled, they are also there—and this they

[Mr. Neill.]

ignore entirely—to see that everyone who is entitled to a pension gets it. I cannot say that of the British Columbia board.

Mr. DUNNING: You appreciate the fact that they are not under our jurisdiction.

Mr. NEILL: Yes, but this can be done by means of regulations. You can say to them, "Here are our regulations; abide by them or we will not pay the seventy-five per cent." The man that pays the piper calls the tune.

In the second place, I would suggest that the minister reduce the age to sixty-five. Third, if it is necessary—and I believe it is—let there be instituted some system of contribution at the younger ages so that as they grow older they will have paid part of the extra cost. I have heard rumours of reduction of taxation in the coming budget; we should all like to see that, but perhaps it would be better and wiser and more fair to keep the taxes as they are for another year and cut the age for pension down as indicated. The cost would not be all lost, because there is no question that whether you call it relief or old age pension these people of sixty-five are on the shelf; they cannot get work and we cannot let them starve; they have to be kept and it would be better for their self-respect and our dignity to do this in the form of old age pension.

I appreciate the fair manner in which the minister spoke. He put both sides of the case fairly, and I appreciate the sympathy he personally expressed, which I am sure is quite sincere. I hope he will allow this resolution to pass, because it is not mandatory; it asks him only to look into the matter, and it would be at least an indication of our united sympathy with the object in view.

Mr. J. R. MacNICOL (Davenport): The resolution before the house has been very well debated and I doubt if I can add much to what has been said. I should like first to compliment the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Heaps) upon his resolution, which brought from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) the very fine statement he made to the house to-night. I enjoy listening to the Minister of Finance. Every time he makes an excellent speech such as we heard to-night I say to myself that if, when he came to Canada, he had only settled in Ontario instead of Saskatchewan, he would have been a stalwart of the Conservative party in Ontario instead of in the Liberal party of Saskatchewan.

Mr. YOUNG: Would you have a good man ruined?

Mr. LAWSON: He wants to redeem him, not ruin him.