

*Canada Assistance Plan*

technicality in making motions at this time to correct this situation. If this were not so, I would propose a motion. However, we will watch it very carefully and see if the minister will not change his mind, and grant the \$100 per month to those on old age pension.

Personally, I feel we must do something for the old age pensioners. I realize the minister said he has taken a look at the guaranteed incomes program, but that there are road-blocks in the way. If there are blocks in the way, in difficult legislation, all he has to do is bring in a parallel clause in the act to give these elderly people \$100 a month. I would tell the minister that with the way the dollar is eroding in value at the moment, within ten years the government will have to supplement the benefits of the Canada Pension Plan. Therefore there is nothing so awful about giving the old people enough to keep them going until 1970. All I ask for is some generosity toward a deserving people, who helped maintain and build this country.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for St. John's West.

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Richard Cashin (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The practice of this house is to follow the procedure of going from a speaker from the official opposition to a speaker from the New Democratic Party, and then on to the other parties, before returning to the government side. This is the second occasion this week that this practice has been departed from in the house. I think the procedure which has been adopted in the past should be followed. The hon. member from Winnipeg is prepared to speak at this time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I apologize. This is the first round on second reading. Perhaps I can call on the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) now, and I will see the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Cashin) when the other speakers have had their turn.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am sure it was just a case of inadvertence which put the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Cashin) on the record for a sentence or two.

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The measure that is now before us is a very important piece of legislation. Like many bills that the Liberals manage to bring before parliament, it has in it both good and bad. The Liberals, indeed, seem to be past masters at this sort of thing. I think they enjoy putting the members of the House of Commons into a dilemma. The minister may think that is what he has done on this occasion. I suggest, before this debate is over, it will be necessary for him to rethink some of the fundamentals of this legislation.

• (9:20 p.m.)

The things in this bill that are good are in fact so welcome that a case can be made for speedy passage of this legislation, so that it might be put on our statute books without further delay. But, by the same token, the shortcomings of this legislation are so severe that we shall have to give them very serious consideration at this second reading stage of debate and also in committee of the whole on the clauses of the bill.

I have already said that the things in the bill that are good are extremely welcome. I must also say that in my view this bill introduces into our social legislation in Canada a step which, for the 1960's, is very retrograde, and is one that I hope will not be with us when this legislation is finally passed.

I suppose the fact that this bill does present us with a dilemma is well demonstrated by the open conflict last week between two experts in the social welfare field. I refer to the present general secretary of the Canadian Welfare Council, Mr. Reuben Baetz, and this predecessor in that same office, Mr. Richard Davis.

As hon. members are aware, during the sessions of the conference on social welfare that was held last week in Vancouver, these two gentlemen made pronouncements on this legislation. Mr. Davis expressed extreme regret that the bill did not cope adequately with the needs of senior citizens. He went so far as to say that because of the bill's shortcomings, the legislation would never get off the ground. Mr. Baetz on the other hand, conscious as he is of the things in the bill that are good, felt annoyed by what Mr. Davis had said and felt it necessary to call a press conference in which he sang the praises of the legislation, urging that it not be delayed.

I know that last evening the Minister of National Health and Welfare quoted the Canadian Welfare Council as being in support