

Old Age Security Act

The figure of \$170 a month, according to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, is enough to banish poverty in this country among old people. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to apprise him of a few facts. In the city of Ottawa, which is by no means the worst place in the country to live, it is very likely that an old person would have to pay \$120 a month for a bachelor apartment. On top of that, I calculate food at \$43 and some odd cents a month, based on \$10 a week multiplied by 52 and divided by 12—not an unreasonable amount to spend on food. These two total \$163.33, so they are left with \$6.66 for the entire month to cover transportation, entertainment, clothing and insurance for their poor possessions if they have any left by that time. That, Mr. Speaker, is as close to poverty as I would care to see my parents come. I hope the parents of the Minister of National Health and Welfare who worked so hard all their lives, as he has said, and whom he holds close to his heart, who are always in his thoughts, are not dependent on the figures which he announced the other day and of which he and his colleagues are so very proud.

The government claims that the time is not ripe to impose any kind of controls on prices in this country. I wonder when it will come to the conclusion that the time has arrived, with inflation rising at 5 per cent a year and no evidence that any of the government's programs are going to abate that rate, and with inadequate escalator provisions built in to accommodate old people. I cannot imagine when the time has been more ripe for the imposition of some controls but the government says, "Not yet". I do not believe the government is really very concerned with these people.

When I hear hon. members opposite, such as the one who spoke immediately before me, claiming credit for this paltry accomplishment, I am left to wonder what they believe is a tiny accomplishment, if this is the best they can do. I notice that my time is close to running out, so I shall conclude—

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, I should like to rise on a point of order to clarify immediately something that the hon. member has attributed to me. He quotes the imposition of certain criteria from the English *Hansard* at the bottom of the right-hand column of page 1793, ending with the words:

—it will be readily seen, Mr. Speaker, that this government has effectively banished poverty for persons over 65 years of age in the course of the last two years.

I recognize readily that the text that would have been distributed and which was to be checked against the English translation was this actual text, but what I said in the House and what is in *Hansard* and I refer here to the French text reads quite clearly:

[Translation]

When coupled with the cumulative benefit increases of \$58.70 a month that have been provided and the provision for full escalation of pensions in future, it will be readily seen, Mr. Speaker, that this government has considerably improved the economic situation of persons over 65 years of age in the course of the last two years.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, this is what I said in this House in French; this is the actual text. I understand now that *Hansard* in English did not translate properly and correctly what I

[Mr. Reilly.]

said, and I hope that *Hansard* will be corrected accordingly. I never said such a thing. I am sure the hon. member will excuse me for interrupting him in this respect, but I would not like such an interpretation to be given to the words I said in this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Keilly: Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot know with what relief I receive his remarks. I am glad he did not say such a thing. I conclude by simply saying that a country which does not take better care of its parents than this one appears to be prepared to do, is a country which has some pretty strange priorities. When Members of Parliament meet in solemn conclave assembled to consider their own circumstances, their own aspirations, their own wants, it does not take very long to come to the conclusion that massive salary increases of the order of 100 per cent are merited and it does not take very long to conclude that pensions of the kind that we have can be implemented without any great jar to the economic system. I do not notice any blushes in their rubicund faces when they line up at the \$1.50 buffet upstairs featuring prime ribs of beef and British Columbia salmon. If a pensioner could get one meal a week in that place he might be in a position to live on the money this government is prepared to hand out.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. I regret having to interrupt the hon. member, but we have reached four o'clock and at this time the House will proceed to the consideration of other business.

[Translation]

It being four o'clock p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business.

[English]

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, normally today we would be taking private members' notices of motion, but I think there would be agreement to take private members' public bills instead. Therefore I would move, seconded by the hon. member for Pontiac (Mr. Lefebvre):

• (1600)

That the House now proceed to the consideration of private members' public bills.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Hon. members have heard the proposal of the parliamentary secretary. Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

CANADA FLAG DAY

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed, from Thursday, February 15, consideration of the motion of Mr. Nelson that Bill C-136, respecting Canada Flag Day, be read the second time and