

*Old Age Security Act*

It was only 17 months ago, in December of 1970, that we debated a bill to which the minister referred in glowing terms today and which, among other things, removed the 2 per cent escalation from the basic pension, which at that point had gone up to \$79.58 and which by that bill was made \$80. We fought that at every stage, on second reading, in the committee, back in the House and so on. Then on Wednesday, December 17, 1970, there were two recorded votes in this House which were on one point only, namely, that the escalation should continue to apply to the basic \$80. This minister led the fight against that proposition, and when the votes were taken on the night of Wednesday, December 17, the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), who announced this change the other night, were both in the House and cast negative votes.

**An hon. Member:** So did the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** No, the Prime Minister did not vote no; the Prime Minister was absent. However, the point I am making is that they took the very firm position that this was the wrong thing to do, to keep the escalation on the basic \$80 pension.

I see it is six o'clock, Mr. Speaker, so on Friday I shall go a little more into the things the government and this minister have said during the last 16 or 17 months, even in recent times when they simply said, "No change". The government is now on the road to Damascus, on the road to the election. The government has seen the light and has suddenly about-turned and said it will do something for the old age pensioners. I do not like this kind of political cynicism.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. It being six o'clock p.m. this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at two o'clock p.m.

At 6 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.