

*Old Age Pensions*

Mr. McGIBBON: I do not purpose allowing this to go without an answer.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that there is no point of order.

Mr. STEVENS: A free-for-all.

Mr. MANION: Perhaps the minister will square himself by admitting that he is often unaccountable himself.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): I will state this to my hon. friend, that if I said anything which caused him to be riled and stirred up I am sorry for it. But I have not made imputations in the same way that he has made them in regard to myself.

Mr. MANION: The hon. minister made an imputation first regarding myself. He made an absolutely unfair and unnecessary statement. I have sat here all the afternoon and all the evening, and I have taken up only about ten minutes time of the House. That is all the time I have taken up. And yet he suggests because I bring forward a resolution—a resolution which has been supported and ably supported by every other member on this side of the House but one—that I did it for the purpose of delaying this bill.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Oh, no.

Mr. MANION: The minister absolutely said it, and I think I am quite within my rights in defending the attitude I took.

Mr. VALLANCE: A great deal has been said here to-night that will be undoubtedly heard all over Canada to-morrow. The hon. member for Fort William made the statement that the government would not accept suggestions from this side of the House, the inference being that we on this side were opposed to the returned soldier getting a square deal. I want to say to my hon. friends opposite that we have got to fight as many problems with the department over returned men as they have. I want to say further, as one who has been attempting to get some recognition for those men, that I do not believe we can find it in connection with the present bill. I do not believe in confusing old age pension with the necessities of returned men. Some hon. gentlemen opposite have spoken of the returned soldiers becoming prematurely aged through war service. In my constituency there are returned men who are aged through their war services although they have not reached forty-five years of age. Still I do not think that the question of granting recognition to them should be confused with old age pensions. I am behind the returned

[Mr. J. H. King.]

men to the extent of one hundred per cent but even so I do not think I can give the suggestion from the other side my support.

Mr. HEAPS: I would not care to impede in any way the very important discussion which has been taking place on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Fort William. However, I understand that his motion has been ruled out of order and therefore it is quite proper to turn to other points. Before action with respect to this clause is finally taken by the House there is one matter to which I wish to draw attention, and I hope that my efforts will be rewarded with more success than has attended other suggestions for the greater part of the day. When the resolution, embodying the principle of this bill was before the House there was one clause which met with the unanimous condemnation, I should say, of members in all parts of the chamber. I am now referring to clause 8, subsection (f), the provision which limits the income of a pensioner to \$365 a year, so that if a person has an income or annuity which yields \$30 a month, or earns that amount, he is not entitled to a pension under the present bill. Now I think there has been a strong desire expressed by all parties that the maximum of \$365 should be considerably increased. The proposal is to grant a pension of \$240, and over and above that the pensioner is to be entitled to an income of \$125 a year, or approximately \$10 a month. That is one of the lowest pensions to be found in any pension act in the world that I know of. If the government would increase this \$365 by a substantial sum it would help to meet the situation, because a good deal of difficulty is going to arise through having such a low maximum. I want to give you a case that came to my attention a few weeks ago. It is that of an aged widow in the city of Winnipeg. She happens to have a small piece of property from which she derives an income of \$18 per month, but out of this \$18 she has to meet the interest on a mortgage and pay her taxes and the general expenses necessary to maintain her home. Under the present bill that \$18 would be regarded as an income and consequently the pension would be very small although she receives nothing out of the income referred to. This matter was drawn to the attention of the government about two weeks ago, and as there seems to be a desire on the part of members to increase the maximum I hope the necessary provision will be made. I do not suppose I would be in order to move that the amount be increased, but I believe the government should do some-