

The Address—Mr. Knowles

future, but the time to do something about that future, if we are to secure it for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, is now. On this score, this government cannot be trusted.

The other qualification I wish to make is that fine as it is to be concerned with the world of the year 2000 or later, surely we ought not to forget the needs of our people today, the needs that face us in this country and in the world at the present time. I want to refer to a few subjects concerning which there ought to be action now to benefit those people who are with us here and now.

May I first refer to a request made this morning by the Leader of the Opposition and supported by my leader, the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlan (Mr. Douglas), that there be presented to parliament with the least possible delay a motion to enable this house to speak to the world about the tragic international situation facing us at this very moment. The words of U Thant cannot be lightly brushed aside or regarded as academic utterances only. The world's top civil servant is telling us that, as he sees it, we are in danger of drifting into world war III. The request made today that this parliament be given a chance to speak out on this issue ought to be granted.

The Prime Minister's reply was that as we are debating the address in reply to the speech from the throne members can speak about this issue to their heart's content. Yes, every member who rises can say something about this issue and may refer to his concern with the deteriorating international situation. But I think—and here I am endorsing what was said by the Leader of the Opposition and by my own leader—that it would be far more effective for parliament to speak by passing a motion, declaring our opposition to the continuing hostilities in Viet Nam, declaring our wishes about the whole situation in that part of the world. The motion need not be debated, or we could settle for a short debate on it. I call on the Prime Minister to give further thought to this matter over the week end. I suggest to him that he call into his office the Leader of the Opposition, my leader—the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlan, the leader of the Ralliement Créditiste, the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette), and the leader of the Social Credit party, the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Patterson), to see if they cannot agree on the terms of a straightforward resolution that could be presented to this house so that this house may express itself in that more formal and more

direct way. That could be done without much debate, or at most one speaker from each party might speak. I urge on the Prime Minister the proposition that a motion agreed on by the five party leaders and passed by the House of Commons would show more clearly to the world than any desultory debating during the eight days, we spend on the address in reply to the speech from the throne our concern, over this matter.

The future of this country, the future of civilization as we know it, may well depend on the quick resolution of the conflict in Viet Nam. We cannot let this go on for five or ten years because no one can predict what the result might be. I urge the Prime Minister to do something about this matter over the next two or three days.

The next subject I wish to raise, under the heading of wanting parliament to do something for our people who are with us here and now, relates to our senior citizens. During the last session of parliament we discussed pensions for days and weeks on end. I know that the members on the government side think that something wonderful was done when the legislation providing for an old age pension supplement was passed. I know they think that we who attacked the attaching of an income test to that supplement, to the top \$30 of what is now the \$105 pension, were just indulging in carping criticism. But, Mr. Speaker, many thousands of Canadians now realize how right we were in protesting that income test, that means test as they are calling it. Indeed many thousands of Canadians are already finding out how bitter is the experience to have to report their income and, as a result, in thousands of cases to have the amount of the supplement they get cut down. The dignity our older people were given when we removed the means test 16 or 17 years ago is already being chiselled away by the way in which this income supplement is being administered by the government.

• (4:00 p.m.)

In addition to the fact that there are thousands of people who in the ordinary way are feeling the indignity of this test, there are some particular cases. I refer first of all to those who are on both war veterans allowance and the old age security pension. The stories we get from these people are tragic and pitiful. In case after case a person is told by the old age security people that the fault lies with the war veterans allowance, but is told by the war veterans allowance people that the fault lies with the old age security administration. The Minister of National