

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order, please.

**Mr. Alexander:** That bill was not proceeded with and the government brought forward the labour bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order, please. So far I have not heard anything that might constitute a question of privilege. From what I have heard, there is no question of privilege.

**Mr. Peters:** Ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Alexander:** Finding that it is close to that hour, may I call it ten o'clock?

• (2200)

### PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

[Translation]

PENSIONS—OLD AGE SECURITY—ALLEGED INTENTION OF QUEBEC GOVERNMENT TO CLAIM PART OF RECENT INCREASE—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

**Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, on June 1 last, I put the following question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare:

Does the minister intend to make a statement on motions following the action taken recently by the Quebec government with regard to its intention of using part of the increase in the old age pensions which was granted through passage of Bill C-207?

The minister answered as follows:

No, it was not my intention, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I understand quite well why the minister did not intend to resume the discussion of the matter because he would have been compelled to say that Quebec had no other alternative than to increase the cost of staying in homes.

Thus pensioners find themselves with next to nothing. Not all of them, I agree, but certainly the poorest and those who, under federal-provincial agreements, will get next to nothing from the \$15 increase which has been granted to them.

For instance, let us consider a few cases quoted by Miss Claire Dutrisac in *La Presse* of May 31 last.

Take a single person, aged 65. After a monthly estimation of his needs, that is, \$90 for housing, \$52 for food, clothing and personal expenses, \$10 for a special diet and \$5 for life insurance, we have a total of \$157.

On the other hand, the income of that person is made up of the old age pension, plus the guaranteed income supplement, that is \$137.70. The difference paid by the welfare service is therefore \$19.30. Medical supplies are also paid by that service, although not directly to the beneficiary. So, in view of the \$15 increase we voted, this person's income will be increased to \$152.70.

### Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

The difference between the needs and the income would therefore amount to \$4.30. This, then, will be the amount added to the allowance of the federal government, instead of \$19.30.

To conclude, in that specific case, Mr. Speaker, this individual will not see one penny of the \$15 monthly increase.

On the other hand, a single person of 65 who does not benefit from the welfare act because his needs have been evaluated at less than \$137.70 will benefit fully from the \$15 increase and will live off the \$152.70 pension we have voted.

Mr. Speaker, this principle resembles that of the communicating vessels. It will be even more pronounced in the case of those who live in old people's homes. Those who used to receive \$137.70 will get \$152.70 retroactively to January 1, 1972. They now pay the institution \$104 a month for room, board and services supplied by the home. Thus they have \$33.70 left for personal expenses such as clothing, entertainment, tobacco and so on.

Now in a few days their pension will be increased to \$110 a month. The sum remaining at their disposal will therefore be \$42.70. If the government of Quebec had not increased their pension, they would have \$48.70 left. In other words, their \$15 increase will in fact be cut down to \$9 since they will have to give \$6 more to the institution.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the federal government should not so deceive. People of 65 or over do expect to get \$15 per month more.

In fact, nearly 12,000 senior citizens of Quebec will see very little or no difference as a result of Bill C-207.

Mr. Speaker, I shall soon bring up this matter again in the House so as to make sure that the government is really taking its responsibilities towards the people who have built our country. I insist on it because we will be old one day and we will then realize the extreme importance of an equitable pension for all the old people.

**Mr. André Ouellet (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member and I was wondering if those comments are really his own or belong to Miss Dutrisac.

In any case, if he wants to criticize the government's decision to increase the pension of the 1,800,000 individuals who will be getting additional payments, he is ill-advised to do so I think and if he accuses the federal government of failing to come to an understanding with the Quebec government I will remind him that the leader of his party in the House sharply criticized Mr. Castonguay when the latter took his decisions following the increases authorized by Ottawa.

The hon. member mentions the possibility that a decrease in supplementary benefits to welfare recipients would cancel the increase coming to some retired people.

I would reply that the officials of the Department of National Health and Welfare are presently studying the effects of the increases in the benefits paid as old age security pensions and as guaranteed income supplement on the benefits paid under the Canada Assistance Plan, and they are discussing all aspects of the matter with the representatives of the provinces. Even if the total number