

Industrial Relations

\$44,657,000; Alberta, \$22,681,000. The whole cost of old age pensions three years ago in Canada was only \$10 million more than the \$77 million we are now paying to the province of Quebec, and it was not as great as what we are paying to the province of Ontario, \$134 million. So anyone who says this government is not doing its duty to the aged is stating something not in harmony with the facts.

We have no reason to be ashamed on federal account of what we are doing for our senior citizens. I could not help feeling that it was unfair this morning—and I am sure the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre will agree—when one of the hon. members sitting behind him referred to myself, heartless man that I was, because I would not recommend any increase for the aged of our country. I want to say to the hon. member, who is not in his seat, that I take second place to no man in this house for what I have sought to do for the aged of our country. Since I have been a member of the government we have made important modifications in the old age security program. We have increased the amount. We liberalized the income ceilings before we had the non-means test program, and we have conducted ourselves in a way that I think justifies my saying, with all those who sit to Mr. Speaker's right, that we do not need to hesitate at any time to face the people of this country for what we have done for the aged and for other sections of the people.

My hon. friend keeps mentioning elections. I assure him that in this particular matter we can hold our heads high, because no government anywhere in any part of the world has done so much as this government has done for the senior citizens of our country.

Mr. Knowles: Five o'clock.

Progress reported.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**PROVISION OF ANNUAL HOLIDAYS WITH PAY FOR EMPLOYEES**

The house resumed, from Friday, June 15, consideration of the motion of Mr. Knowles for the second reading of Bill No. 211, to provide for annual holidays with pay for employees.

Mr. Elmore Philpott (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I think I had the honour of adjourning the debate the last time this matter was before the house. May I say I also have to be very careful because I remember that at one time earlier in the session when one of the hon. members opposite had two items standing in his name on the order

[Mr. Martin.]

paper, I spoke on the wrong item. There was one on which I intended to support him and another on which I intended to oppose him, and as the house will remember I spoke on the wrong one.

I am in somewhat the same spot today, because with respect to one of the items standing in the name of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) having to do with holidays I intend to oppose him, but as far as this particular bill is concerned, although I was taken by surprise last time and only entered the debate under the exhortation of my friend the hon. member for—

Mr. Knowles: Comox-Alberni.

Mr. Philpott: —Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett), I have had some time to think about it in the meantime and I have decided that this bill is worthy of all the support I can give it.

I may say I have come to that conclusion after thinking over carefully not only both sides of the question but all sides of the question. Quite often I find my heart on the same side as a good many of the hon. gentlemen opposite but I often find my head on the other side, or perhaps I should say my pocketbook. Quite often I am thoroughly in agreement with a good many of the things they suggest, and we on this side are presenting them to our own cabinet ministers. We have to press for them both in public and in private and the argument we have to meet is well, where is the money going to come from? I think some of my hon. friends on the other side do not always have to meet that argument as we do.

Therefore we have to watch our step as to what we support, but I do think that in this case that consideration does not enter into the picture, because the question of public finances is not involved in Bill No. 211. I will state frankly, Mr. Speaker, that one of the things that would incline me to oppose the bill at first glance would be that it seems to me that this parliament or any other law-making body should never pass a law where what is to be covered has already been covered by the people in the ordinary course of their own actions.

I submit that if we examine the general situation with respect to holidays with pay in Canada we will find that by and large the people of Canada have solved their own problems very satisfactorily with regard to this matter. We also know that the bill applies only to the minority of workers in Canada who can be covered under our constitution by federal legislation, and that the vast majority of workers are covered by provincial legislation.