

*Old Age Security Act*

show the same consideration and extend the same good will to the provinces which the provinces have extended to it.

I am very glad to see this legislation now in its final stages. I hope that as a result we will be able to deal more adequately with the problems of oil and gas as they affect the people of Canada.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

Motion agreed to, amendments read the second time and concurred in.

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[Translation]

**OLD AGE SECURITY ACT****AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR PAYMENT OF SPOUSE'S ALLOWANCE TO PERSONS SIXTY TO SIXTY-FOUR**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Lalonde that Bill C-62, to amend the Old Age Security Act, to repeal the Old Age Assistance Act and to amend other acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, every day in the House should be a Friday. A lot of work would be done in much less time, and that would be very nice.

As I was saying quite seriously a while ago, young people look at what we do, observe us, remember what we say and act accordingly. One only has to listen to their arguments here and there after meeting or any occasion to be convinced that they have ideas fully in line with the legislation passed in the House of Commons or provincial legislatures about family privileges and rights. It is for that reason that they often say it is much more advantageous for them to live together without being married. It is not to the advantage of a society to have laws that promote such situations. I think that if we are not careful, if we do not take care right now to try and improve our way of thinking, our way of legislating, very difficult situations will result in our society because the family is the basis of society. The family is the measure of society.

If we want to have a sound society, a united society, a strong society, we must absolutely preserve those small societies—families—in strong and united circumstances. Why not, if we recognize as a spouse someone who lives with another person, even if the law says that it will be recognized after three years. God knows that in our society there will be hundreds of cases like that and it will be difficult to find ways of meeting the requirements of the act. I think this will again be an underjob and we will create situations as we find in social welfare.

I think all hon. members agree to remember that in certain cases some people reasoned this way: I am unemployed, my wife works, but the income is not adequate to meet the needs of the whole family. I am willing to work, but I can't find a job. I am 55, 60 or 58 years old. So they are told: "Go to the welfare office. There is a law speci-

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

cally designed for you". But they answer: "Well, I saw the welfare people, but they said: We cannot help you, your wife is on the work force. We cannot help you unless you live away from home. Go and live elsewhere and we shall help you". I would hate to see such situations officially recognized under a federal legislation.

I think we should consider very closely the clause of the bill dealing with the spouse and try to improve it, so that it will give greater recognition to family rights and promote stronger family ties. If the pension and supplement are granted to people who live together without being married, why should it not be granted also to widows and widowers who have not remarried, or to bachelors who are not married either; they are entitled to live elsewhere, so why should they not qualify for it too?

● (1620)

So I think we should very seriously consider that whole matter so as to avoid possibly unfortunate arguments during Golden Age Club meetings. Imagine a Golden Age Club meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. There will be people 75, 80, 60 years old, some of them married and others single, widowers and spinsters, bachelors, all kinds of people. Among them are those who live together, and who will benefit from a federal legislation, and others who will be denied that benefit and are also there to socialize, as members of the club. In what spirit do you think they will discuss our statutes?

Secondly, I think if we took it for granted that we should legislate and amend Bill C-62 to allow anyone over 60 to benefit from that legislation, we would be taking a step towards national unity, because those funds, those revenues would all stem from the same source and would be intended for people aged 60 or over. Then, we might understand better what it is to live in a federal state, why we have a parliament, why we have population-oriented laws which are the same throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding my remarks, I would like to refer to a publication which has been distributed to us and is entitled: *Le soutien et le supplément du revenu* dated February 1975. It is a federal-provincial review of a working paper we already know about. In that booklet, on page 16, there is a table which I found very interesting. I would like to end my remarks by mentioning that, in that table, the costs of the programs for senior citizens: old age security pension, guaranteed income supplement and superannuation, amounted to \$3,680,000,000 for the year 1974-75.

Secondly, for people aged less than 60, in all groups, there were the provincial social welfare programs, the general shared costs welfare programs under the Canada Assistance Plan: \$1,220 million.

Various assistance programs under the Canada Assistance Plan, category c): \$760 million; federal family allowances: \$1,780 million; Quebec family allowances: \$95 million; workmen's compensation: \$400 million; unemployment insurance—we should say "work insurance", it would sound more modern: \$2,250 million; disability allowances, dependant pensions under the Canada Assistance Plan and the Quebec Pension Plan: \$300 million, which makes a total of \$6,805 million. Then we have to add the other related programs: training allowances,