

Statute Law Amendment Act, 1970

Parliament who was deceased, and of course to the widow as stated in the second part of motion No. 10 that is before us in the name of the President of the Privy Council, would the President of the Privy Council comment on whether or not the reference to the widow only would be taken to include a widower if a widower were to remarry, and that the same benefit would ensue?

• (12:10 p.m.)

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I believe I am right in saying to the hon. member that the point is hypothetical. I cannot put my finger on the appropriate section, but my understanding of the provisions of the statute is that for the purposes of the act the definition of a widow is deemed to include also a widower.

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should just like to say that we in this party appreciate the action the government is taking to change the maximum rate that an orphan can receive from 60 per cent in the case of three or more children to 80 per cent in the case of four or more orphaned children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: As agreed, the procedure will now be to put the first motion in the name of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre) moved:

That Bill C-194, to provide supplementary retirement benefits for certain persons in receipt of pensions payable out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and to amend certain Acts that provide for the payment of those pensions, be amended by deleting therefrom Clause 13 of the said Bill.

Mr. McBride: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Will we be permitted to speak further about the general implications arising from amendment No. 10 or is the matter closed now?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: My understanding is that when we get to motions Nos. 9 and 10 the debate will be resumed on motion No. 10.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members are aware there are 15 amendments on today's notice paper, put there by members of this group, that seek to amend Bill C-194. That may sound like a complication compounded, but under the rules the only way at this stage to deal with a number of clauses of a bill is by putting down amendments in respect of each of those

clauses. However, the Chair has already made a very acceptable ruling which groups these various amendments so they are in packages that stand by themselves.

However, may I make it very clear, and I think this is a very simple proposition to put forward, that the purpose of the total group of 15 amendments placed on the notice paper is to amend Bill C-194 and to remove from it all the things that Bill C-194 does for Members of Parliament which it does not do for civil servants and the others covered by Bill C-194.

The main purpose of Bill C-194, the purpose that runs throughout and the purpose that applies to everybody who is covered under this bill, is to provide for the escalation of pensions after people have retired. It does this under two headings. In the first place, it does it immediately, this very next month, for all people who are now retired; civil servants, R.C.M.P. and armed forces personnel, Members of Parliament and so on, by providing a supplement to their pensions based on the length of time they have been retired.

The second way in which this purpose is carried out is by providing that all persons who are now employed, whether they are in the civil service, in Parliament or wherever they are, will, when they become pensioners, have the possibility of having their pensions increased each year provided the cost of living continues to rise.

This is the main purpose of this bill. That is what it does for everybody who is mentioned in it. But my complaint and the complaint of a number of my colleagues is that there has been put into this bill something that is foreign to and beyond its original purpose, namely a complete revamping and recasting of the pension plan of Members of Parliament.

The purpose of these amendments of ours is to take out of the bill all of those clauses that do that revamping, and to leave in it only what is there for all the others. If all our amendments are carried, then there will be left in the bill for Members of Parliament and for senators just two things. The first is the guarantee of escalation of our pensions after we retire and, secondly, the requirement that we pay one half of one per cent of our indemnity into the fund out of which these escalated payments are made.

In other words, it would put us on all fours, a phrase used earlier today, and in the same position as all of the others covered in this bill. That is what we think Parliament ought