

have liked to proceed myself, but I felt I would have been out of order under standing order 58 (2), as has been pointed out by the chairman. May I say a word for the chairman, too—and of course in saying this I am out of order. Our present chairman is good at expediting the business of the committee. He is good at adhering to the rules, and I like to see that. All of us should adhere to the rules.

I should have liked to speak at greater length on this subject of old age pensions; but I shall content myself by simply endorsing what has been said by the hon. member for Vancouver East. I, too, for a long time have been an advocate of reducing the old age pension age limit to sixty-five years. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it should be increased to sixty-five years. I believe, further, that the pension should be not less than a dollar a day, or approximately \$30 a month.

For the present I shall have to be content with this brief statement.

Mr. HATFIELD: I should like to endorse what has been said by the hon. member for Vancouver East. The old age pensions received by the old people to-day represent only a starvation existence. What is the reason for the difference in average payments? I notice that the pension paid in British Columbia is \$19.13, in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick \$14, and in Prince Edward Island \$11.

Mr. ILSLEY: I think the limit in Prince Edward Island is \$15. Apparently Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are more strict. They make very careful inquiries into the circumstances of applicants, and if they have incomes, or possible sources of income, the proper allowance is made. I presume that that is done to a greater extent in those provinces than it is in British Columbia.

Mr. COLDWELL: Just a little closer fisted.

Mr. HATFIELD: I do not think that is any reason at all. I do not believe the pensioners in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are getting their fair share. That is my my experience.

Mr. ILSLEY: It is within the administration of the provincial authorities.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: I have had a number of complaints from old age pensioners whose sons are in the armed forces. They complain that when a small dependent's allowance is made by reason of a son's service in the armed forces the old age pensioner's pension is reduced by an equal amount. That seems to me the last straw, for a govern-

[Mr. MacNicol.]

ment that is attempting or professing to attempt to build a new social order while a war is on.

I have discussed this matter with the department and have been informed that that is the regular procedure. When dependent's allowance is granted by reason of a son's service in the forces, that amount is deducted from the old age pensioner's pension in Ontario.

Mr. MacNICOL: I protest against that, too.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I wish to join with other hon. members who have protested against the amount of subsistence given to old people. It is generally conceded that the cost of living increase is now about 15 per cent. That fact alone should be sufficient to convince the government that this \$20 a month should be increased. That fact has been recognized in other departments by making an allowance for increased cost of living. Surely when the government recognizes the principle, and when one government department every so often publishes an index to show the increased cost of living, it should be clear without argument that it should raise the amount of the old age pension. That principle has been established in Alberta. It has been clearly recognized there that under present conditions \$20 a month is not sufficient for the old people to maintain a decent standard of living. With that in mind they have increased the amount, on their own account, to the extent of \$5. They know that the \$20, and even the present \$25, is not sufficient.

When I was home I had the pleasure of addressing a large number of old age pensioners. I learned that before that time another member of parliament had addressed the same group. In effect that gentleman said these old people should be ashamed of themselves for even asking for an increased pension. Surely we should not attach the stigma of unpatriotism or charity to the old age pensioner, because in my opinion those people have every right to their pensions and not from the point of view of charity. At this time when the government is spending thousands of dollars in an endeavour to build up morale in commercial enterprises, it should be recognized that one of the best ways of doing that would be to treat our old people properly. I venture to say that a number of people in industry, and especially in the aircraft industry, may have elderly parents or grandparents who are receiving old age pension. One of the best ways of building up morale, not only in these industries but