

Mr. Lundrigan: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.—

An hon. Member: You are just getting worse.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has alluded to the fact that the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate has not had an education. I cannot deal with the question of whether or not the hon. member for Bruce has an education; that is his problem.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) on a question.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) be willing to answer a question at this time?

Mr. Whicher: I would, with pleasure.

Mr. Nystrom: The hon. member said we did not have any sources for obtaining revenue such as this. Would the hon. member be in favour of a capital gains tax to raise money to improve the plight of our old age pensioners?

Mr. Whicher: Mr. Speaker, this is a very sensible question. I would be very much in favour of having a capital gains tax in Canada.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, perhaps we could come down to earth for a moment. I rise to speak on the motion introduced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), and do so with sincere regard for all senior citizens. But at this time, I wish to speak specifically with regard to war veterans allowances and pensions. The War Veterans Allowances Act was first introduced in 1930, and in the 39 years of its existence it is my opinion that not enough consideration has been directed to the veteran, especially that veteran who is of advanced years and has no means of coping with the progressive increase of costs with regard to his material needs.

The hon. member pointed out very forcibly the need for reconciling the progressively increasing cost of living in comparison with wages and other areas of productivity in the country, but for some reason or other we seem to forget the aged veteran who is partially disabled and, more important, those aged war veterans who are totally disabled.

Suggested Pension Payment Corrections

For the six months that I have been here in parliament I have read, repeated comments by the Prime Minister of the country (Mr. Trudeau) and members of the cabinet about their dedication to equal opportunity for all Canadians regardless of race, creed or colour; but I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they should add the words "regardless of their condition and capability".

I refer again to the war veteran who, through devotion in war service, is partially or completely incapacitated and cannot earn any type of income. The War Veterans Allowance Act was amended in 1952, again in 1955, in 1957-58, and again in 1960 and 1961, but it has failed to protect the Veteran from the obvious runaway rate of increase in the cost of living.

I am sure that all members of both sides of the house are sympathetic toward the needs of the war veteran and agree that the government should give immediate consideration to the introduction of legislation to improve the position of all senior citizens. I am sure, too, that all hon. members who are war veterans themselves have every sympathy toward the plight of the particular veteran in advanced years. If anyone who does not attend the parliamentary committee on veterans affairs would care to visit that committee some time, he would find this is one group of parliamentarians who have one aim in mind, regardless of partisan politics, and that is to improve the plight of all war veterans. They take this attitude with regard to loans under the Veterans Land Act and all legislation having to do with those who served during Canada's involvement in past conflicts.

So I say with all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, what are we waiting for? The Woods' report of the committee to survey the work and organization of the Canada Pension Commission has been ready for months. The committee has received submissions, carefully prepared, from every veterans organization in Canada. The Royal Canadian Legion has prepared comprehensive comments on the report. The Hong Kong Veterans Association of Canada has presented a brief pertaining to the recommendations of the Woods' report. We have a joint statement by the National Veterans Organizations of Canada and a submission by the National Council of Veterans Associations of Canada. What are we waiting for?

• (8:40 p.m.)

What are we waiting for? Let us get the white paper completed and tabled so we can