

Mr. MARTIN: He knows, furthermore, that the government of Canada pays seventy-five per cent of the contribution.

Mr. LOW: But not of the additional \$5.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I was not arguing that; I did not say that the federal government did not pay seventy-five per cent of the amount; but they do not pay one five-cent piece of the \$5.

Mr. MARTIN: My hon. friend is trying to give the impression that this parliament alone is responsible in connection with that matter. If he gives the full story he will realize that the government which is paying seventy-five per cent surely has the right to suggest that the other jurisdiction, which is paying only twenty-five per cent, might well increase its share, if an increase should be made.

Mr. LOW: We did, to the extent of \$5 a month.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I did not say that the federal government was not paying seventy-five per cent. I readily accept that; it does. But just because the federal government contributes seventy-five per cent, why should it have in force regulations which prohibit provincial governments from raising old age pensions as high as they like?

Mr. MARTIN: I will point that out when the legislation is brought down, and my hon. friend will have his answer.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am pleased to hear that. I think the minister will agree with me that it is long overdue. These elderly citizens have received too little for many years, and have had to live in a state of poverty.

Mr. KNOWLES: And they will still be poor.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am hopeful that when the federal government does bring down its old age pensions legislation the amount provided will be considerably in excess of \$30 a month. And I sincerely trust that the means test will be eliminated, because it is a federal baby, and not one from the provinces. If that is done, then I think the minister's criticism would be justified.

Mr. MARTIN: One further question. In view of the question I put a while ago, is the hon. member aware that his neighbouring province of British Columbia pays more than the province of Alberta?

Mr. JOHNSTON: Yes, but just at the last session of the legislature of Alberta provision was made for granting medical services, which will greatly outrun what is done by British Columbia.

Mr. MARTIN: Oh, no.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Alberta is always ahead in that regard. I am pleased to see the other provinces coming along, and I think Alberta has done much in prodding this government to bring down old age pension legislation which, we hope, will be worth while.

Mr. KNOWLES: This is the parliament of Canada. Let us deal with the things with which we are supposed to deal here.

Mr. JOHNSTON: And when we are dealing with old age pensions, let me say the amount should be much greater than \$30 a month. It should not be less than \$50 a month, without a means test. Some may laugh at that, and may say it is crazy to suggest that we should give an old age pension of \$50. But is it crazy? Is it crazy to expect our old people to live on less than \$50 a month, in view of the fact that prices have so greatly increased? Why, certainly it is not. We cannot expect these elderly citizens, who are not receiving enough to keep body and soul together, to continue living in that way.

In passing, I should like to refer to pensions for the blind, and to suggest that again in this instance the amount allowed is inadequate.

Time is passing rapidly, much more rapidly than I had thought, so I shall turn now to another subject. I want to refer particularly to the speech of the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet (Mr. Lesage). I should like to refer for a moment to that portion of our agriculturists who do not come within the budget, who are receiving no consideration by way of relief in taxation. The hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Fair) asked for the number of farmers who pay income tax, and the return tabled showed that only 3.6 per cent paid income tax in 1945-46. This means that 96.4 per cent of the farmers of Canada are earning less than \$750, if single, and \$1,500, if married. In Quebec only one-tenth of one per cent of the farmers are receiving sufficient income to pay an income tax. These are the people to whom the hon. member for Pontiac (Mr. Caouette) was referring when he asked the government to provide them with a decent standard of living. The hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet is reported on page 3006 of *Hansard* as follows:

Mr. Speaker, since I still have a few minutes at my disposal, I should like to quote a few excerpts from a book written by M. Henry de Jouvenel and entitled "Huit Cents Ans de Revolution Francaise":

The financial genius that was Law or Lass conceived every form of modern credit. He