

COLOURED PAPER
PAPIER DE COULEUR

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Let us take the case of old age pensions. Old age pensions were established by a Federal ~~Government~~ act which the provinces passing enabling legislation. Ever since 1931 the Federal Government has been responsible for paying 75% of the pension with the provinces paying 25% and the cost of administration. Now the Federal Government is seeking to throw more of the load on the provincial government. Newspapers in various parts of Canada have been seeking to misrepresent the position of the Saskatchewan Government with regard to old age pensions. I think ~~it~~, therefore, it might be well for me to place the facts before you at this time.

In 1943, the year ~~ix~~ before we took office, the average old age pension paid in Saskatchewan was \$17.55 a month. When the CCF government came into office in Saskatchewan the average pension had been ~~faiced~~ raised to \$22.55. Acturally the amount was supposed to be \$25.00 per month but the provincial government of that day took the position that a married couple who were on the old age pension were only entitled to \$20.00 each, on the assumption, I suppose, that two could live more cheaply than one. The first thing the CCF did was to remove these restrictive regulations and provide for the payment of the full \$25.00. We also stopped the practice of putting caveats against the small homes of old age pensioners. The next thing we did was to provide complete health services for ~~x~~ all old age pensioners and ~~the~~ their dependents, commencing January 1, 1945. These included medical and surgical care, hospitalization, dental and optical care, glasses and drugs. These health services, it is estimated, are worth anywhere from \$3.00 to ~~to~~ \$5.00 a month to the old age pensioner. In 1945 we paid in addition a supplementary bonus of another \$3.00 per month. Had the Federal Government on this occasion preserved the ratio of 75 to 25, they would have paid an additional \$9.00 which would have meant that the old age pensioners would have been receiving \$37.00 a month and complete health services. The Federal Government, however, refused to make any additional payment and the old age pensioners had to get along on \$28.00 a month. At that time we expressed the opinion that the old age pension should be not less than \$50.00 a month and we indicated our willingness to pay the provinces share of that amount. We believe that a \$50.00 a month pension is the very least that ought to be paid to our elder citizens and the Saskatchewan Government is quite prepared to pay its share of that figure. However, when the legislation was brought down at Ottawa if provided for