

The Address—Mr. Noseworthy

announced a few days ago by the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Lapointe). As one hon. member has already said in this house this afternoon, that increase would have come with better grace from the government had it come last year when the veterans asked for it, or even had it come in the earlier part of this session. There is no doubt in the world but that the government had not the slightest intention of bringing in that legislation this session when the speech from the throne was prepared. Certainly the government had not at that time reached any decision on this question. When members of the opposition prodded the government on this matter we did get an announcement from the minister after two or three weeks that legislation would be introduced at this session. Even at that time it appeared that the government had not decided what the amount of the increase was to be. The minister was not able to tell us, and it was not until the opposition had been prodding the government for another week or so that we finally learned what the amount of the increase would be.

It is difficult to understand why a government which, on its own initiative, could show its concern for government appointees in the high income brackets, should have to be prodded by the opposition and by veterans all across the country in order to show their interest in the veteran. The same thing had to be done over the years regarding old age pensions. It is difficult to understand why a government that is so ready in some instances to take the initiative in providing for those who really do not need that provision is so reluctant to do something for old age pensioners and veterans and has to be pushed and prodded into action. There is just no good reason why we are not told during this session that there is to be legislation improving the position of those veterans who are receiving veterans allowance. There is just no good reason for withholding such legislation this session, and giving to the veterans nothing more than the meagre promise of a committee to be set up next session. What a solace that will be to hungry veterans and to their children throughout the coming winter. I am sure that when some of these aged veterans, finding themselves and their families in need, turn to the pages of *Hansard* and see where the minister promised them a committee next session, they will get a great deal of comfort from it. That is the kind of comfort that this government offers to those veterans who are now in receipt of veterans allowance.

The government would have shown much more graciousness toward these veterans had they announced in the speech from the throne

that both disability pensions and veterans allowances would be increased this session, and had they brought in their legislation earlier, announcing exactly what the amounts were to be. They would not then have left themselves open to the criticism which has been levelled at them from one end of this country to the other; the criticism that they were holding back that vital legislation until we got a little closer either to a federal or some other election.

Mr. Fulford: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, don't you think the hon. member is a little too late to interject provincial politics into this chamber at this time, even if it were proper to do so?

Mr. Noseworthy: I am making the speech. If the hon. member has not taken advantage of the days that have passed to whip up the dying Ontario Liberal horse, then it is his own fault. It is too late for him to do it now. I am not making an Ontario election speech, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fulford: What are you doing?

Mr. Noseworthy: I am voicing the sentiments that have been expressed to me by veterans living in my constituency, veterans who are receiving veterans allowances and their comrades who are both pensioned and non-pensioned, veterans who tell me what they think of the scurvy trick of leaving veterans allowances to be studied by a committee next session instead of some legislation being brought in at this session.

I just cannot understand the point of view of cabinet ministers who bring in their old age pension, an old age pension which will benefit every millionaire in this country over 70 years of age, which will benefit practically every citizen in this country over 70 years of age except the great war veteran drawing veterans allowance.

Mr. Martin: That is not the case, and you know it.

Mr. Noseworthy: The \$40 which he receives for old age pension will, if I understood the minister's statement, be deducted from his veterans allowance.

Mr. Argue: That is right.

Mr. Noseworthy: The sum and substance of the matter is that that veteran will be no better off because of the introduction of the old age pension at 70. I have heard the argument raised that these men should not get old age pension and veterans allowance as well because they would be drawing two payments from the government. It has been pointed out to me that there is quite a difference between the man who has paid for a