

an exaggeration to suggest the payment of a minimum of \$200 per person, considering the cost of living at the present time.

Now, I would like to remind the minister, who is now in the House, of the importance of considering—which I would have liked to see—whether it would be possible under this bill to extend the OAS to the spouse who has not yet reached 65.

It is absolutely impossible for couples to make ends meet when only one spouse receives benefits.

I suggest that it is normal that, like all other hon. members, I remind once again the minister of the importance of establishing, in the near future, I hope, the possibility of allowing a couple to benefit from the maximum of \$340, and I hope that amendments will be made and increases will be granted rather shortly so that those individuals may enjoy proper assistance based on the cost of living.

I would have hoped indeed that the minister would take that opportunity to introduce a bill lowering the age of eligibility for a pension. I wish to say that I will readily support that bill bringing a certain remedy for our senior citizens, but I would like to remind the minister once again—and I think that it is my duty to do so—that judging from the comments made to us as members, every Canadian is in favour of that. I say it again, I have already made a survey on the possibility of reducing the eligible age to 60 and 99 per cent of the thousands of answers I received were of course in favour of such a possibility.

I feel that, as representatives of the people, we must assess technical changes in industry over the last few years. We will realize that, physically, it is absolutely necessary to lower to 60 the age of eligibility for the old age security pension. Is it too much to ask that the minister in charge at least consider the possibility of doing so? Of course, some people, whose work is lighter, wish to work until they are 65. On the other hand, we know that in some industries where the work is more demanding, several workers would like to be able to get the old age security pension at 60.

We also know that we would thus also improve the social atmosphere. We would make way for younger people and industry would not complain about rejuvenating its labour force. Due to collective bargaining, it is difficult to remove some of these people today; as a matter of fact, in some industries it is impossible to do so.

Therefore, I think that on account of a lack of work, we are now discouraging young people who are now more learned, better informed. I believe we ought to consider the possibility of granting old security to people 60 years old, at least to those who want it. It is right to say, I think, that we have the responsibility of giving a rest to those who deserve it. After working for forty years, a person who reaches 60 deserves, I think, to retire. This should incite hon. members to favour granting old age security in earlier years.

It seems to me the minister had already shown his interest in this proposal. A few months ago, he said in this House he was giving his word he would take up the matter with the provinces. I hope that negotiations to this effect are already under way. Indeed I hope and believe that the

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Canadian people—in my own riding, the opinion strongly favours this suggestion—would be eager to avail itself of this possibility with all its interesting consequences. This would certainly improve the social climate and I think Parliament should seriously investigate this matter.

The proposition as made is an acceptable corrective, in view of the recently experienced increases, but I feel it is inadequate in comparison with the needs and the changes which workers in industry have known. As evidence of this, I say that in a paper plant which I know quite well, a machine which ran at 300 rpm never rushed its operator nor compelled him to run to do his job. Today, because of the changes, this same machine drives the paper at a rate of 3,000 feet per minute and this forces the worker, even if he is more than 60 years old, to run to do his job properly. This example proves the importance of considering the changes that are happening in industry and the benefits that they may bring.

I therefore believe that the minister is aware of this question today. I urge the government to consider this possibility in the interest of those who are already 60 years old. In view of the present context, I know that the opposition parties could well have a tendency to force the government to take such action. In fact, several hon. members have often stated that they are in favour of such action.

We have heard some members of the Progressive Conservative Party promote a reduction in the pensionable age. I know that the New Democratic Party has long been in favour of a rejuvenation of this legislation. I also know that the members of the Social Credit Party are in favour of this measure. Should I ask all opposition parties to unite and force the government to take this action? We know that we are numerous enough to do this. Of course, you may well tell me that we would have to pay the price for it.

I would like also that we assess the possible savings if, on the one hand, we should grant holidays to thousands of people and, on the other hand, we should find work for thousands of unemployed; I would also like to know what is the cost to society of those unemployed and of the difficulties facing the people nowadays.

I think we could make there important savings which could be very beneficial. In doing so we would, I think, correct and improve a social climate which demands it.

I would like to confine myself to these few remarks. We could make speeches like others did, express many views about the importance of corrective measures needed to check rising prices but I think I must confine myself to this because there will be other opportunities to discuss other issues, other problems or difficulties facing society but I hope that through the plea I make to the Minister first on the possibility to grant the old age security pension at 60 without disregarding the legislation which I find just and equitable with the necessary adjustment, we will succeed in bringing justice to the people and seriously correcting the problems facing us if we lower the eligibility age for old age pensioners for all interested people, all these changes being taken into account.

I hope that the Minister will not wait for the opposition parties that speak loud outside this Parliament and that,