

Old Age Security Act Amendment

but that levels of pensions should be established by a body of competent individuals who will assess the needs and make recommendations as suggested in the report of the Senate committee on aging. Therefore we heartily concur in the recommendation made by the Senate committee.

We welcome the introduction of this resolution, imperfect as it is, because it gives us an opportunity to discuss more fully and completely the needs of our senior citizens and the best solution of their problems. We hope that the government will bring in amendments to establish a basic pension of \$100 or, as I have said before, \$105 a month and will adjust the other provisions accordingly.

The Chairman: During the earlier part of the sitting today the right hon. Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to the resolution before the committee. If it is the wish of the committee I should be pleased to hear arguments regarding the validity of this amendment.

Mr. Churchill: Does the minister accept it?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned earlier that I wished to raise a point of order with respect to this amendment. First of all, a proposition in almost the same terms as this amendment has been dealt with already by a vote of the house. The amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the throne called for an increase in the pension of \$25 a month. As I said, this has already been voted on, and it is an axiom of the procedure in this house that a proposition, once having been determined upon in the course of a session, cannot be put forward again.

● (7:30 p.m.)

But more than this, Mr. Chairman, may I refer to page 216, paragraph 4 of citation 250 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, which reads in part as follows:

The fundamental terms of a money resolution submitted to the house with the Governor-General's recommendation upon which a committee of the whole is set up cannot be amended.

I believe that in this case not only are the fundamental terms of a money resolution amended but an entirely new proposition is submitted for the consideration of this committee. For example, all the words after "that" are to be deleted and an entirely new system is proposed to the committee. On the ground that the fundamental terms of a money resolution cannot be amended, I submit that this amendment is not in order.

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Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, I should like you to take under consideration the fact that at the resolution stage the government has put forward a proposition which may or may not be acceptable to the house. During the course of debate on the resolution stage suggestions may be made which might lead the government to make alterations in the bill to be founded on the resolution. There are instances in British and Canadian parliamentary practice where resolutions have been brought forward, have been modified; they have been withdrawn, other resolutions have been brought forward, and a bill founded upon a modified resolution has been introduced.

In the amendment before the committee at the present time an alternative proposition is put forward, and I would think that the government would welcome a decision of the house with regard to it. The government has put forward a proposal to increase the rate of pension to certain pensioners and it has been disclosed that this increase will amount to \$30 a month. We have put forward the alternative proposition that in view of the fact that an increase in pension is being considered by the government, a more equitable scheme would be to make the increase \$25 a month across the board without excluding anyone. This is an alternative proposition, and why should not the house be tested on it before the government proceeds? If the house is of the opinion that the second proposition is better than the first, then the government may modify its bill accordingly. We are not at the stage where although a bill may have been prepared—it usually is—the legislation is set without any possibility of being changed. Consequently I suggest that Your Honour should take this factor into consideration.

At page 216 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, from which the minister read, paragraph 3 at the top of the page commences with these words:

The object of the resolution recommended by the Crown is to give the house a first opportunity to discuss the advisability of making a certain expenditure.

It is quite obvious that the house could reject the resolution, in which case the government would have to try again. But at the same time, when the house is in committee of the whole, as it is at the moment, alternative suggestions might well be considered. Although the minister has drawn the attention of the Chair to paragraph 4 and has based his argument largely upon that paragraph, which reads, "Amendments are out of order if they are proposed with a view to substituting an