

what is going on because perhaps this very bill is the marriage document for which we have been looking. Perhaps this is it, and all the rest was word of mouth. Here we have something on paper. I tried before to help my former neighbours, the members of the New Democratic Party. I tried to warn them what would happen if they allowed things like this to take place. I told them about the occasion when the Progressive Party, which was twice as large as the New Democratic Party or the CCF, was wooed and won by a Liberal party in the twenties and explained that after the wooing was over little was left of them. A few prairie politicians called themselves Liberal-Progressives and a few senators called themselves Liberals.

• (1620)

I paid a disrespect to my colleague the other day when I said that perhaps some day I will go to the gallery of the Senate, since I may never get the floor, and see Senator Lewis and Senator Knowles being escorted by Senator Argue. I forgot that they deserve two escorts and that Senator Eugene Forsey, who is the expert on the constitutional correctness of governors-general, would be there to help them up the aisle.

I used to sit next to the NDP in the last parliament and it was an exhilarating experience. I enjoyed it when brave David took on Goliath across the way. What wonderfully polished pellets he used to throw across the aisle and what brilliant invectives there were about the "arrogant technocrats" who were going to fall. I looked, hoped, wondered if this would take place and some day with a shrug and perhaps a couple of four letter words, in a figurative sense, Goliath would expire and David take over.

But now I have been moved and, apparently, so have they. No more David and Goliath scenes at all. Now, it is David and Jonathan. We Presbyterians love the Old Testament and we remember what David said of Jonathon: "thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women". These are stirring days and stirring times, and I verily believe that we are living in the last days of pre-organic unity. I say to the minister, having placed things in this proper historic perspective, as I have a right to do so since he gave the broadest geographic background, let him not proclaim and at the same time try to be credible that this bill is a burst of generosity for which senior citizens should exude eternal gratitude to him and his ilk. For years, indeed since this government took office—and I put this at a decade ago—with its inflationary policies year after year it has been victimizing the very people about whom the minister talked with such apparent concern. This bill is not excessive generosity. This bill is delayed and partial justice, because the older people have been unfairly bearing the burden of inflation put upon them and the government has been remiss in not taking remedial action long since.

I have here a splendid document published by the United Church of Canada. So ecumenical are we these days that as a continuing Presbyterian I will quote from it. I find here an editorial from the Toronto *Star* which reads:

In 1967, the federal government, being of sound mind and body,—

### *Old Age Security Act*

That was when the *Star* was Liberal—decided to increase the standard old age pension of \$75 a month by providing a supplement of up to \$30 for those needing it. It wasn't a princely sum, but it helped.

In revising the pension, Ottawa was declaring, in effect, that we Canadians could afford to turn over a somewhat larger portion of our collective resources in order to maintain our 1,663,000 old age pensioners at a slightly more decent level of existence.

It was a solemn and careful undertaking, made after much agonizing about social responsibility and much squinting at our collective pocketbook—and yet we have been renegeing on that undertaking ever since. Each year we have been giving old age pensioners a smaller share of our resources than we did in 1967; each year the pension buys less than it did the year before; and each year our old people slide further backward into the penury from which we set out to rescue them.

That situation has not, alas, profoundly changed, and I say to the minister that while he produced copious figures, usually they were of the kind that indicate that improvements cannot be made. But he produced copious figures on the state of the nation and the state of the old people. I have also done some research in this matter. If the old age security from 1963 when this group of people took over the destinies of this country had been increased by the actual cost of living year by year, the minister's announced figure today would not be sufficient to give them the same purchasing power that they had in 1963. Let him call that generosity. Let him look at those figures and say that eternal gratitude must forever fall upon the Liberal party of Canada.

**Mr. Whicher:** That is at the age of 70, not 65.

**Mr. Stanfield:** There is our friend again, the just society fellow.

**An hon. Member:** He woke up again.

**Mr. Macquarrie:** I would like to say that if the actual cost of living had been added, the pension would now be up to \$107. That is the situation. We have held back. We have laid that burden on the older people. We have made them and other people on fixed and low incomes bear too much of the burden of inflation which an incompetent and insensitive government has visited on the people of this country for a decade. As one of my colleagues said, the six buck boys are seven bucks short.

So, I cannot stand up and say that, in the light of this legislation, my colleagues and I are so impressed and so enamoured that we are going to vote to sustain this government in office. If this was expected of us, then I am sorry to disappoint you. We agree pretty well with what Donald Macdonald of the Canadian Labour Congress thinks of the budget. He does not think it is much, and we do not want to disagree with him in that appraisal of the budget. So, our affirmative vote for the bill that we have before us is given because we regard it as a delayed recognition. It is an attempt to catch up. But, as I pointed out, even at that it does not quite do the job.

I was impressed with the many suggestions which the minister momentarily brought before us, and then almost instantly pushed away for interesting reasons, such as that they cost too much, or the provinces do not like them, or we have not had our conference on that yet. So once again we seem to be pretty well frozen to \$7 below what in justice the pension should be. There are more things that