

Statute Law Amendment Act, 1970

cases the need is very great indeed—that when the hon. member made at least the suggestion that for certain Members of Parliament who have safe ridings it is easy enough to go along with criticizing pension increases for Members of Parliament, but that for members whose ridings are not so safe it is a must to have very substantial increases in pensions, that having a riding which is reasonably safe for a member is not entirely unconnected with what one does in pleading the case for people who really need help in the riding, the people on low incomes and those who have no pensions or very low pensions.

Mr. Francis: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member has quoted me and I think in fairness she should quote me accurately. My concern was that for certain types of members the conventional rules of eligibility had the result of excluding 88 per cent of members of this House from any benefit whatsoever—not in regard to the quantum of the pension but mere eligibility for the pension. I believe the hon. member has misconstrued my remarks on this point.

Mrs. MacInnis: That was the next point I was going to make, but the one I have already made stays, because I suggest that there are very many people besides Members of Parliament who have very low pensions or no pensions. He may feel as righteously indignant as he likes over a pension which is as low as \$3,000 under the old act, but I should like to know how many people in his riding, excluding perhaps some of the higher paid public servants, are enjoying pensions of \$3,000 for the rest of their lives. I refer to ordinary members of the riding.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question?

Mrs. MacInnis: If you want to ask a question, let me finish with him first and then I will let you have a shot. I want to deal with this other point. The hon. member is melancholy about the old pension system, because he says only 12 per cent can qualify under it to get a pension. I ask him, what does he want? Is it a situation in regard to pensions where every member who is once elected to Parliament becomes attached to the public payroll and is pensioned for life? If that is not what he wants, I am at a loss to understand what he does want, because it seems to me very much like that. And don't

let him make another speech on this clause. He can make another speech later, because we have other amendments.

I suggest that if he would put half the attention into pleading for a guaranteed income and for pensions for the low-income people in his riding as he has today for members of Parliament, perhaps he would find there would be less of a turnover in his riding when it comes to future elections. Perhaps the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Anderson) would like to ask his question now.

Mr. Anderson: I should like to clear up one point. I hope the hon. member does not feel, as I understood her to say, that one's performance in the House and as an MP entirely determines whether one is re-elected, whether in the same seat or not, because I feel that her hon. friend from Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) would take strong exception to that statement.

Mrs. MacInnis: No, no. I made no such suggestion. I said it was not entirely unconnected with that. You can find your examples where you like. Of course, accident also comes into it very definitely. Accident comes into our getting here in the first place and in our leaving it, in the second place.

I would also like to say that I wish the hon. member for Ottawa West would go back and read the speech which my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre made on March 10 and from which the hon. member for Ottawa West was quoting so freely this morning. In every case he would find that my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre was not talking about the pension scheme already in existence, but about what is being proposed for us, when he said it was too generous and this sort of thing. Just let him read *Hansard*. You can get your shot on the next round. Look at *Hansard* in the meantime and it will save time.

Mr. Francis: The statement is on the record, and it is a misstatement. I should like to ask the hon. member: When the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) referred to a ceiling of \$9,000, which plan was he referring to—the present one or the new one?

Mrs. MacInnis: I am saying that when he referred to the plan being far too generous he used the words, "what is being proposed for us in the future." That is what he said. I guess I have dealt with everything up to date. I now want to come to my own position on