

by the Export Credits Insurance Corporation. What they asked for at that time was the very thing that this bill now provides. They asked that they be enabled to refinance without recourse, and this is what the bill now does.

Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson: That answers my question.

Hon. Mr. Leonard: It is much more urgent now than it was in 1964.

Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson: Yes, I understand.

Motion agreed to, and bill read second time.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time.

Hon. Mr. Leonard: Honourable senators, I move, with leave of the Senate, that the bill be read the third time now.

Motion agreed to, and bill read third time and passed.

OLD AGE SECURITY ACT

BILL TO PROVIDE GUARANTEED MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-251, to amend the Old Age Security Act.

Bill read first time.

SECOND READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

Hon. John J. Connolly, with leave of the Senate, moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, it was originally intended that the honourable Senator Connolly from Halifax would sponsor this bill. Unfortunately he was taken ill yesterday, not seriously, but enough to make it inadvisable for him to be present here today. Therefore, you have in his place another Connolly, and I am afraid a long-winded one, if I may quote my friend from Gulf (Hon. Mr. Power).

Yesterday Senator Leonard, in a notable speech dealing with education in this country, paid a special tribute to the initiative taken in this house some years ago by a special committee called the Manpower and Employment Committee, to which all parties gave their full support and great results followed.

The same type of tribute can be paid to another committee of the Senate in respect of the bill that is before us this afternoon, namely, the Committee on Aging. While I do not say that the idea of a basic minimum income provision was new with the committee on Aging, nevertheless, what it did over a period of time, with great devotion on the part of its Chairman, its members and the staff it employed, was to provide basic information as a result of its studies and research, which led to the legislation we are to consider this afternoon. I do not claim, and I am sure the chairman or any member of the committee would not claim, that all of the provisions of its report are embodied in this legislation, but I think they gave great impetus to the implementation of the proposal now before us.

In the first place, I should say that this is an act to amend the Old Age Security Act, which is chapter 200 of the Revised Statutes of Canada. Old age pensions were originally introduced in the Parliament of Canada in 1927, and a means test was attached. The original Old Age Security Act was enacted in 1951. At that time a payment of \$40 per month was prescribed for all Canadians over 70 years of age, without any means test. Between 1951 and 1963, by successive parliaments and successive governments, that old age security payment of \$40 a month was raised gradually from time to time until in 1963, by chapter 16 of the Statutes of that year, it reached a level of \$75 a month.

I think we should remind ourselves also, honourable senators, that originally the Old Age Security Act was looked upon not as a be-all and end-all of income for our older citizens, but rather as assistance to them in their advanced and advancing years. It was not originally conceived and operated as a provision for a minimum income for the older citizens. Nonetheless, it has developed appreciably since that time as has the philosophy behind it.

There was some question, of course, as to the capacity of Parliament to deal with measures of this kind. In order to make it abundantly clear and, indeed, to confer jurisdiction on Parliament, an amendment was made to the British North America Act in 1951, and a new provision was introduced by section 94A. That section reads as follows:

It is hereby declared that the Parliament of Canada may from time to time make laws in relation to old age pensions in Canada, but no law made by the Parliament of Canada in relation to old