

I find very practical the suggestion of the Minister of National Health and Welfare to legislate immediately on those two questions that should be implemented before 1974. There is no doubt that everyone knows that those amendments to the legislation will provide relief to over 500,000 Canadians who receive retirement pensions or other pensions provided for in the act.

In the Speech from the Throne at the beginning of this session this government considered the different problems affecting all Canadians and promised a complete revision of all social security measures in Canada. Following that formal undertaking by this government, the Minister for National Health and Welfare released his working paper on social security in Canada on April 18, 1973, which contains several proposals that should completely change the social security plan in Canada. And a little later I would like to come back to some of the projects that I find particularly interesting and cherishable, specially in the area of employment strategy.

I would like first of all to commend the Minister of National Health and Welfare for the federal-provincial conference of ministers that was held on October 11 and 12 in Ottawa.

● (1700)

We, from Quebec, have heard the leader of the new government of that province talk about profitable federalism during the election campaign.

In my opinion, the results of the federal-provincial conference held in Ottawa on October 11 and 12 are tangible evidence of that profitable federalism, where the representatives of two levels of different governments can discuss their problems and ways of solving them and implementing measures while protecting the interests of all, whether under provincial or federal jurisdiction.

That is why, following last spring's publication of the working paper on social security by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, after the provincial ministers of Health and Welfare met in Charlottetown on September 25 and 26 to discuss further and make their positions known before resuming talks with their federal counterpart at the conference held October 11 and 12. During this conference, the federal Minister of National Health and Welfare obtained agreement from all provincial ministers on five points, on a complete revision of the Quebec and Canada plans.

The first point of agreement is the increase in benefits according to the cost of living. In future benefits paid under these two plans will be based entirely on increases in the consumer price index, following the removal of the existing 2 per cent ceiling for everyone, including retired workers.

The second point of agreement is the raising of the ceiling on earnings used to compute benefit and contribution rates. The rates of contributions paid to the Canada and Quebec pension plan accounts will be identical from now on. Both will be established at \$6,000 in 1974. For the benefit of those who did not know it, there used to be a difference of \$300, I believe, between the ceilings of the Quebec Pension Plan and the Canada Pension Plan.

### *Canada Pension Plan (No. 2)*

The third point of this agreement provides that maximum retirement benefits under the Canada Pension Plan, which amount to \$1,089 in 1973, should increase to \$3,000 by 1980, according to estimates. Old age security benefits are added to these retirement pensions.

The fourth point of this agreement concerns a change of residence by the employees. Employees entering or leaving Quebec will now contribute the same amount before and after moving, and this contribution will be based on the same earning level.

The fifth point pertains to the suppression of the earnings (employment income) control for Canada Pension Plan participants between the ages of 65 and 69. Retirement benefits under the Canada Pension Plan for participants aged from 65 to 69 will no longer depend on their justifying beforehand their employment income—which used to be determined by the earnings control to which they were submitted—and from now on, they will be automatically granted to all those aged 65 who will have stopped contributing to the Canada Pension Plan.

This understanding, Mr. Speaker, given any disagreement which can exist in any area between provincial and federal jurisdictions, proves that there can be an agreement provided the citizens' rights are protected and safeguarded.

I do not doubt that we all readily accept these two amendments and, as the minister said in his speech at the beginning of this debate, other amendments will soon be added to the act.

Speaking about social measures, I would like to talk a little about the duty of the government towards the citizens and of the concern they feel about them, especially about the citizens who are the victims of inflation and of the increase in the cost of living and who do not have any other income than the old age security pension. We all know that last September the government, for the second time in their parliamentary year, granted an increase in the old age security pensions to mesh them with the cost of living. This is a supplementary measure this year and those who get the guaranteed income supplement will benefit from it.

In the same area, the government, by a temporary measure, gave higher family allowances with the October cheques. This measure is temporary—and I am confident it will be adopted during this session—until the new legislation on family allowances is passed. Everybody knows that this new legislation which is now before the committee provides for a three-fold increase over what is provided in the present act, up to a maximum of \$20. To this will be added a special program of the provinces and I shall talk with full knowledge about the province of Quebec which will also offer family allowances amounting in some cases to \$45 a month.

All that, Mr. Speaker, to come back to what I said before: when it is possible to adjust the views of both federal and provincial jurisdictions according to the needs of citizens, it is always possible to do better.

I would be remiss for not doing like some of my colleagues who, during their speeches, have brought forward some ideas and some amendments regarding our social legislation; I would like to support the member who yes-