

Canada Pension Plan

1965 to advise employers, because this is a most complex plan. To what extent will this staff be available; because I put it to the minister that the more successfully this information is put across to the employers, the more chance there is of early success with the Canada pension plan.

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, in this regard we are going to carry out quite a substantial campaign to inform both employers and the public at large, their benefits under the Canada pension plan and their obligations with regard to it. As a matter of fact, in my department we have already had discussions with the officials in the various district offices across the country and have been considering the problems of administering the plan. I can assure my hon. friend that the same degree of helpful service will be provided to the public by my department as is the case with regard to all contributions they are required to make. In addition to this we will have quite a large program of supplying information to employers, and our anticipation is that we can do this with our present staff and the additional staff which we will be hiring for use in connection with the Canada pension plan.

Mr. Lambert: There is a differentiation between income tax and the Canada pension plan. The administration of income tax is concentrated in district taxation offices, and the taxpayer has to go there perhaps only once. I am thinking of outlying towns in western Ontario and the prairie provinces, for example, where it may mean a trip of 200 or 300 miles for the individual to come in to see the officials in order to determine how this is to be set up, and so forth. I do not think you are going to get people to come in two or three times. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, the plan has to be a little more realistic than simply saying to these people "We are in the district taxation office. Come and see us". I hope this program envisages that there will be a travelling clinic of some sort in a district, so as to advise these people, because everybody is going to need this information.

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, I would say that a good deal of information and instruction would be provided and mailed early to people, so that if any employers have questions and they drop a note to the district taxation office, we will help them. As a matter of fact we will send people, if they need it, to show them how to meet the require-

[Mr. Lambert.]

ments in connection with deducting employees' contributions and submitting them as required under the Canada pension plan.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I wonder if the minister would know whether the provincial schemes submitted provide for a certain deduction for collecting the money.

Miss LaMarsh: Not so far as I am aware.

Mr. Valade: Does the minister mean that she does not know whether such a thing exists? I do not think the minister can be sure of this. Is that right?

Miss LaMarsh: Mr. Chairman, I am sure my hon. friend is referring to the Quebec legislation.

Mr. Valade: Ontario and Quebec; any provincial scheme.

Miss LaMarsh: There is no provincial scheme, aside from Quebec, of which I am aware. The Quebec scheme is delineated in a very detailed resolution before the Quebec legislature. However, as yet there is no Quebec bill exposed for public view, nor have I seen it. Therefore I am not in a position to say whether there is such a deduction.

Mr. Valade: In that case, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister would allow me to ask another question. If the Quebec plan does provide for such a deduction, would the government take that into consideration and apply the same rule?

Mr. Benson: Perhaps I should answer this question, Mr. Chairman. I do not think we could do this with respect to the Canada pension plan without considering the other cases where businesses are collecting taxes for the government of Canada. As I mentioned earlier, this is quite a broad area and includes such things as unemployment insurance, sales tax and income tax, and will include Canada pension plan deductions. For this reason it would have to be a government decision made by the Minister of Finance and presented by him in a budget. It is something that could not be decided now.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to drag this discussion on too long, but this is a very important point. If the province of Quebec comes up with a plan that does provide for such a deduction, this would make it a little different from the federal scheme.