

Canada Pension Plan

ada pension plan. I want to find out from the minister what plans his department has to establish some kind of office in the Northwest Territories in respect of this matter. Because at the present time the Department of Labour has no such office. I have already gone after the Minister of National Revenue, who was very generous and amiably said that he would look into the matter. The hon. lady, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, also said she would take a reading on the possibility of setting up an office. If we are going to add 1,000 civil servants in the first year, I want at least one to be added in the Northwest Territories. That is all I want for my 38 per cent of this country.

I should like to know from the minister in charge of numbers whether or not he is prepared to establish an office in the Northwest Territories to handle these matters or whether, as is now the case, people who apply for unemployment insurance or other benefits will have to apply either at Edmonton or Montreal, depending on which of these two centres they live closer to. That is the first question, and I should like the minister to be decent enough to give the same kind of commitment his cabinet colleagues gave, which is that he will at least look into the necessity, under the provisions of the Canada pension plan, for establishing an office in the Northwest Territories—and in the Yukon if they do not have one, although I am not speaking primarily for the Yukon. I would be very happy if he would give me his commitment in this regard, but in my dealings with the minister I have not quite got him to that point, so I do not expect he will commit himself.

The other question is a more general one. In the numbering process there are three ministers who have their hands in the pot.

Miss LaMarsh: Four.

Mr. Rhéaume: One is the Minister of Labour, who is going to number people. The minister says four and she may be right. Second, there is the Minister of National Revenue who will get money from these people. Then there is the minister herself who passes the goodies back to them; and the Minister of Finance will also be in the act.

My question is this: When an official of the Department of Labour, say, is numbering me in this mysterious process, whatever it is—and I am not going to accept it willingly—are these numbers to be used—the hon.

member for Portage-Neepawa also raised this point—for any other purpose, and will an official of the Department of Labour be able to draw my file, such as it is, and have access to the information on it? I do not know how the computers will handle all these matters, but it is a source of concern to me that any one of the officials of three different government agencies, or four as the case may be, would be able to draw my file and have access to all the information which may be on it, which could be used for any purpose whatever.

We discussed this question in the committee and received reassurances that information would be used only for the particular purpose of the official who had his little task to do. However I was a federal officer for years and know the temptation to browse and expand one's reading into areas not necessarily required of one in the course of duty.

I want to know from the minister whether his officials, in the process of trying to plant a number on me, will have access to all the information which, for instance, the Minister of National Revenue and the Minister of National Health and Welfare may have. This question is a source of concern to a lot of members and people. With four government agencies administering a very complicated program I want an assurance that some method will be devised to preserve confidentiality of information which may not relate to the particular and peculiar processes of, say, the department of the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Benson: I think this is covered in clause 107 but I would assure my hon. friend that the number will be used by the Department of National Revenue for keeping the pension record of a particular person. The pension record as such is available only to the Department of National Revenue and the Department of National Health and Welfare.

In regard to the first question raised by my hon. friend, my colleague the Minister of Labour has indicated to me that he would be willing to give him the same assurances regarding the situation in the Northwest Territories that I have given the hon. member verbally.

Mr. Skoreyko: Mr. Chairman, just to follow up the remarks of the hon. member for Northwest Territories, a little further on in clause 107 (3) the following appears:

Any information obtained by an officer, clerk or employee in the Department of National Health