

*Canada Pension Plan*

innuendo in her remark, and I admit that the minister is much younger than I, but is she looking forward to the time I reach 65 and retire?

Last Tuesday I asked her whether the bill, a copy of which was apparently available to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), was to be made available to other members of the house. Within 20 minutes of the time I asked that question two copies were made available, so the question was worth while. Having studied this bill since it has been available, I have concluded that it has taken a great many months to prepare. One need only examine it to see how intricate and complex it is. Perhaps one could suggest that it has been in preparation almost since April 8, 1963. There have been many revisions, and this bill is the final draft.

In spite of the fact that there may be agreement between house leaders as to the length of debate at this stage, I should like to complain vociferously, as an individual member, about that limitation on the time we have to study this very complex bill. I do not believe the greatest legal mind in Canada could come up with answers, within such a limited period of time, to the many apparent questions arising from a consideration of this bill. I hasten to add, Mr. Speaker, that we are not going to oppose second reading. That has been our position in respect of a Canada pension plan throughout the various phases of every presentation of the government's pension scheme. We favour a Canada pension plan.

There are one or two general questions I should like to ask the minister. A week ago today, when the resolution was before the house, I asked the hon. lady several questions and I do not criticize her for not replying to them on that occasion. At that time we had reached the end of our evening's work and we allowed the resolution stage to pass. I do hope the hon. lady will see fit to give us at least some of the answers to those questions. During her earlier remarks she said she would attempt to answer some of the questions, but that she may not be able to answer them all. I can understand that situation because the bill is to be referred to a joint committee immediately following second reading, or as soon thereafter as the joint committee has been established. We as a committee of the whole will be studying the bill when it comes back from the joint committee, so at that time we will

[Mr. Monteith.]

have the hon. lady with her officials in front of her to answer questions in detail.

I am sure hon. members who speak on this subject during the next two or three days will refrain from asking unnecessarily detailed questions, but rather will confine their questions in depth to the pertinent realities of the plan. We will, however, want to know about some of the things the minister as yet has not explained. It may be that she will be in a position to give some detail, but at least for my part I will not expect her to give this detail, unless she does so following consultation with her officials during adjournments between sittings. That is the position I intend to take, but perhaps other members will feel differently.

During the resolution stage I asked the minister whether she had given any consideration to possible priority requirements recommended by the Hall health commission. What is she going to do about the report and recommendations of that commission? Are those recommendations to be left in abeyance or forgotten? I should like to receive a reply to that question.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I have a general question I should like the minister to answer. Has there been any indication of how many provinces are going to join with the federal government in the Canada pension plan or how many are going to operate their own plans? The minister mentioned today that Quebec is going to proceed on its own, and I am not quarrelling with that. The legislation provides for it. But is this the only province which, according to the minister, has indicated it is going to do this? Are other provinces going to do the same thing? Has there been any indication as to the number of provinces that are actually joining in the Canada pension plan with federal administration only? I should like to know about Ontario. Has there been any indication yet? Surely the minister can give us some enlightenment on this matter.

There is another matter about which old age security recipients in Canada are going to be very disturbed. It is obvious that when the minister spoke at the resolution stage she intended to build up great hopes for the elder citizens of Canada. These hopes have proved to be completely unfounded. She mentioned at that time that all future old age security pensions would be pegged to the cost of living index and would increase automatically if living costs increased. The minister said she hoped that this would not only develop a sense of security among our older citizens but