

Canada Pension Plan

recommendation of the special joint committee on pensions that, if at all feasible, these two bodies of Canadians should be covered.

As there are a great many things involved in this it will be necessary to take some time to consider it. However, if the chamber does feel that these two groups should be covered later on, if technically feasible and after actuarial reports have been received, it is suggested that this may be done by amending other legislation, namely the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act. As some hon. members will be aware, the armed forces in the United States are covered by O.A.S.D.I. However, there the provisions are stacked, and this arises by virtue of the fact that in the United States there is compulsory service at an early age for almost everyone who subsequently enters the labour force. So there is no integration between the two schemes in the United States; it is simply a stacking procedure.

It does not seem reasonable, in the conditions which prevail in Canada, to stack the Canadian pension plan on top of the already fairly generous service plan; therefore it will be necessary to integrate the two schemes. The government has asked for actuarial studies and plans to give this matter further consideration. It will be necessary to base any decision on technical feasibility as well as on financial implications and, not least, on the views expressed during consultation with the groups concerned, and then action could be taken by amending the two pieces of legislation which I mentioned earlier.

Therefore, in order that we may leave this matter open until a later date, it is my pleasure to move, seconded by my colleague the Minister of National Revenue:

That section 6 be amended by striking out lines 9 and 10 on page 8 and substituting the following:

"(g) employment as a member of the Canadian forces or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, except as provided by any other act of the parliament of Canada."

There is as well a consequential amendment to section 7(1)(g).

Mr. Pugh: I should like to make some general remarks first and then ask a question. The object of the plan, to which all parties agreed at the beginning, was that it should be fair and that it should be for the benefit of as many Canadians as possible. Can the minister give me percentagewise or in some other fashion the number of farmers in Canada who will be included in the plan? Let

[Miss LaMarsh.]

us take a percentage; it will probably be a lot easier.

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, I cannot give that figure at this minute but I can have it dug up.

Mr. Pugh: Surely the dominion bureau of statistics has it.

Mr. Benson: We will get the information. We do not have it in front of us at the moment.

Mr. Pugh: It seems to me this is something that should be ascertained now, before we pass this clause; because if my information is correct there is a tremendous exclusion of the farming population of Canada.

Mr. Benson: The only answer I can give without having the figures before me—I am arranging to have them brought to me—is that only farmers who earn less than \$800 would not be covered by the Canada pension plan. That means that only those will get no pension who have been out of the plan during the whole of their working life because they have earned under \$800 during their whole working life. In a year in which they make \$800 they would contribute to the Canada pension plan. This is the only exemption. The similar exemption in the case of an employed person is one who makes less than \$600 during the whole of his lifetime. This is the only way they could be absolutely out of the Canada pension plan.

Mr. Francis: I should like to speak to the amendment. I am particularly anxious that this amendment be adopted by the house because there is a serious problem with regard to the pension programs of former members of the armed forces. As hon. members know, the legislation before us cannot be amended except with the consent of two thirds of the provinces representing two thirds of the population of Canada. The effect of the amendment moved by the Minister of National Health and Welfare is to leave the door open for subsequent amendment of legislation specifically providing for retirement pensions for members of the armed forces and the R.C.M.P.

I have had a substantial number of representations expressing concern with regard to those who have retired from active service with the armed forces and who subsequently seek re-employment with the government of Canada, often with one of the crown corporations. In these cases a very rigorous retirement test is applied. There are many such retired persons in the employ of the government of