

Canada Pension Plan

whether this is a preliminary step toward further curtailment of their passenger service?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my attention was drawn to this report by a colleague of the hon. gentlemen, and I have also seen it myself. I did have inquiries made as to whether it was correct, and I was told it was correct. I was given a reason which I pass on to the house for what hon. members may think it is worth. That reason was that the facilities for providing food on the trains were being discontinued because of lack of patronage.

As I have explained to the house before, there is no responsibility on the part of the government as such with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway. But if you will permit me, sir, because I know there is widespread interest in this matter, I would say that at the request of several hon. members I did arrange to have the chairman of the board of transport commissioners appear before the railway committee to explain exactly what was the board's authority with respect to this matter. I hope the proceedings of the committee will be printed quite soon at least in one language so that all hon. members will have a succinct statement of what the board's responsibilities are.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, because this matter is of great interest to the people of Canada. Could the minister arrange to have the president of the C.P.R. appear before the committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines to inform the committee of their company's policy?

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not happen to be a member of that committee and there are a lot of very articulate members of the house who are. I suggest that the matter should be taken up in the committee with the chairman of the committee.

PENSIONS

PROVISION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY PROGRAM

The house resumed, from Thursday, March 11, consideration in committee of Bill No. C-136, to establish a comprehensive program of old age pensions and supplementary benefits in Canada payable to and in respect of contributors—Miss LaMarsh—Mr. Lamoureaux in the chair.

[Mr. Douglas.]

The Chairman: Order. When the committee rose yesterday clause 91 of the bill was being considered.

On clause 91—*Regulations.*

Mr. More: Mr. Chairman, in the light of the proceedings last night and some of the questions that were asked I still think, in spite of what was said, that some things are not completely understood. I want to pose a question to the ministers concerned that I hope will clear up this situation at least from the point of view of information.

I should like to put it this way. It seems to me that the integration of plans is the stumbling block in this connection, and I wonder whether the word "integration" is in fact the correct word to use. I can accept the word "decking" as suitable, but "integration" seems to me to give a false impression.

This is the point I should like to clarify. The bill is a compulsory one. Even though people may have a pension plan in which they have an interest either as employees or employers or as self employed persons, the bill compels them to pay 1.8 per cent or 3.6 per cent, as the case may be, of their earnings into the Canada pension plan. It is not a matter of integration but rather a matter of adjustment of the plan they now have with the government compulsory plan. There is in fact no integration of plans at all. If the payments that people are now making into their own plans are maximum payments, their only alternative is to adjust the payments they are making into the plan they now have so they can make the payments they are compelled to make to the government plan.

I had a letter just this morning from the operator of a small family business. His concern is that we are allowing parliament to impose a burden on him that he does not want to accept because to the maximum extent of his ability he has entered into a plan for his purposes to which he has been making payments. As I understand the situation, this fact does not matter. As a self employed small businessman he will be compelled to make additional payments to the government plan totalling 3.6 per cent of his earnings, and if he finds this is too big a burden his only alternative is to make an adjustment in the plan he now has.

Miss LaMarsh: What my hon. friend has said is true to some extent. There may be decking where people keep both plans or there may be integration, which is what the federal government is doing with respect to