

calculated; the relationship between pensions for men and women, and so on, should be looked at and given very thorough study.

I see we are getting pretty close to one o'clock and although my 40 minutes would take me past one o'clock, I shall conclude before one so that any member who has been planning to speak next can be ready at two o'clock.

I should just like again to put in a word for the recipients of the war veterans allowance. We have to do this every time. Some of these retired civil servants are on pensions that are pretty low. Whatever the reason for that may be, there is no argument that they are low. There are retired civil servants whose pension and other income is such that they also receive war veterans allowance. There is to be an increase in the pensions of those people in January, so here we go again: off it comes from their war veterans allowance, since there is a ceiling in that act.

The President of the Treasury Board will say that this question falls under the department of another minister, but the President of the Treasury Board is a pretty important member of the cabinet in all financial matters. Just as the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall) and I have been urging that steps should be taken by the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. MacDonal) to make sure that veterans get the full amount of old age security and the guaranteed income supplement increase without it coming off their war veterans allowance, so steps should be taken to see that retired civil servants who receive an increase in their civil service pension also get the full benefit of it and not have it taken off their war veterans allowance.

I also urge that action on the Canada Pension Plan not be delayed, that the 2 per cent ceiling must come off soon.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I am glad to see the hon. member for Hillsborough applauding, though I was even happier to hear the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) say two or three days ago that he expects this to happen before January 1 next. He is much more positive about it now than he was earlier in the session.

There must be no failure in this respect. What we are doing for these 100,000 people we must do for all those thousands of people who are participants in the Canada Pension Plan. Escalation of their pensions, to take place in January 1974, must not again be limited to 2 per cent but must be the full amount of the cost of living increase, just as will now be the case for our public servants.

Again I suggest, as I said earlier in my remarks this morning, that one of the values of this legislation is that it establishes a principle—and I think it is a principle that should apply to pensions of all kinds, both government and private—namely that we have to do all the prodding and pushing we can to make sure that private pension plans are also escalated. As I said the other day, I welcome the statement of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) that the income tax regulations will be changed so that private pension plans that do escalate beyond 2 per cent can be registered. I think the government could go further and

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say that these plans cannot be registered unless they do go beyond 2 per cent.

Since it is just about one o'clock, Mr. Speaker, I guess I had better draw my remarks to a close. As I say, I welcome this legislation. I welcome it in the name of the people who will benefit from it. I also want to see these other improvements I have mentioned. And most of all, I want to see the kind of benefit that we are talking about today made available to all our people, and this includes private pensions across the board.

One last kick before you get to your feet, Mr. Speaker. We must not forget the lowering of the pensionable age across the board to the age at which it is already possible for public servants to retire, namely 60. Let us make that, on a voluntary basis, the rule for all.

Mr. Speaker: It being one o'clock I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

[Translation]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the debate on Bill C-220 as well as on the old age security bill adopted yesterday and on those which will be tabled next week has been made possible by the railway strike. If parliament had not been called back, senior citizens, pensioners and young people would have had to wait till the end of October or till next year for higher benefits.

Moved by the uncontrollable inflation of prices, to which it is one of the main contributors, and goaded by public opinion, the government is trying to calm the population by adopting measures which are aimed at making tolerable this continuing rise in prices which sometimes swallows up the savings of a lifetime of work. The fight against inflation has been abandoned and, through this law as well as the other social laws which have been adopted or which we plan to adopt in the near future, inflation is being accepted and an attempt is made at following it, as my colleague from Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) so aptly put it yesterday.

These laws will have no other effect than to further increase the cost of living. What we offer today to some members of our society, we will be taking away from those who work, from those who have an income. The government had agreed to an annual readjustment of pensions and allowances on the basis of the increase in the cost of living and the price index. Today, it has to bring the readjustments on a quarterly basis and soon maybe it will probably have to do it every month. Why? Because the cost of living increases more rapidly than incomes. The dog will never succeed in catching its tail, especially when the tail is getting shorter faster than the nose of the dog is getting longer. That is the situation which we are facing today. We get increases in salaries, we get increases in old age security pensions, more generous allowances, but prices keep increasing at a faster rate than these incomes. The net result is that we are further behind than before,