

Canada Pension Plan

Mr. Skoreyko: I know what your responsibility is in this House of Commons. It is nothing more than to—

The Deputy Chairman: Order, order. There is so much noise in this committee the Chair is not able to hear sufficiently well to appreciate the finer points of the arguments which are being advanced. Perhaps we can now get back to a consideration of clause 91.

Mr. Skoreyko: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I should now like to return to the question posed earlier during this debate in respect of that which will happen to existing pension plans in so far as provincial government employees and school teachers are concerned. I wrote down the remarks made by the Minister of National Revenue in respect of this matter of provincial government employees. He said that this was a matter for provincial government decision. I should like to know whether provincial governments have the authority or the right to refuse to participate in the Canada pension plan.

Mr. Benson: Yes, the provincial governments have the right to refuse in respect of their own employees. This was dealt with during our consideration of clause 6(1)(ii).

Mr. Skoreyko: I appreciate that answer, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to clarify the situation.

The Chairman: Shall the clause carry?

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Mr. Chairman, I am going to be only a couple of minutes and I know that the ministers will bear with me. Both ministers have tried to be very clear as to the government's position with regard to the feasibility of regulations for the integration of the 5,000 plans. Are there regulations which will enable a private plan to be integrated with the Canada pension plan? I ask that question of the Minister of National Revenue, and perhaps he could answer because the Minister of National Health and Welfare is not in her seat. Are there regulations set out which will enable a private plan to be integrated with this one?

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, as I explained earlier, it is not within the power of the federal government to force private plans to integrate in any particular way with the federal plan.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I quite realize that the persons who are appointed to manage the private plan have a choice with regard to whether or not they wish their plan to be

[The Deputy Chairman.]

integrated. I am also well aware of the fact that the Canada pension plan is compulsory and people have no choice with regard to whether or not they pay into it. What do you want them to do?—forget about the money they have already paid into a company plan, a union plan or whatever type of plan it may be? Surely the minister does not expect them to do that.

First of all, the Canada pension plan is compulsory. That is the first step. Let us face facts. Let us put everything on the table. The fact is that these other plans will be subjected to compulsion. On the basis of these two facts I say to the ministers, are they drawing up regulations? Will regulations be made which will make provision for the integration of a pension plan? I say "a pension plan" because apparently the government has not categorized the 5,000 plans.

Mr. Munro: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

The Chairman: Order, please. Would the parliamentary secretary allow the hon. member for Acadia to finish his point? I gather he was just reaching the end and perhaps he should be allowed to finish it.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the co-operation you have shown me. I appreciate it. I was almost finished the point I was trying to make. I want to make it abundantly clear. This is the regulations section we are dealing with, and before I was interrupted the question I was trying to pose was, has the government studied the feasibility of making any regulations to permit the integration of a private pension plan? I say "a private pension plan" because I am not going to pursue further the categorization of the 5,000 pension plans already in existence. We know that the federal civil servants are already included and in that regard I mean also the armed services and the R.C.M.P. But outside of the scope of federal jurisdiction has the government given any consideration to regulations that would facilitate the integration of a private pension plan? It is a simple question. I wonder whether the minister would care to answer at this time.

Mr. Benson: Question.

The Chairman: Order. The minister obviously feels that he has answered the question before. I realize the hon. member may not be satisfied with the answer—would the hon. member kindly resume his seat—but he must know that he cannot go on ask-