

Canada Pension Plan

5. Because many who cannot make further provision are now middle aged, it should have a moderately short maturity period.

6. It should make the adequate minimum pensions available from age 65.

7. That it should provide security in real terms by relating pension levels to earnings levels at the time of retirement.

8. That it should provide safeguards which will help to keep the plan on a moderate scale, so that it will not be expanded in benefits without proper regard to future costs and therefore savings.

Those are the essential principles of the Canada pension plan. I believe it will commend itself to the public and to all hon. members, and represent a great new step forward in providing social security for Canadians in their years of retirement from their active working lives.

Mr. Monteith: It seems to me somewhat strange that the minister should have gone into such detail at this stage, giving full particulars of specific cases, and so on. I cannot hope at this stage to deal in specifics, not having had the opportunity to study the hon. lady's statement.

I am pleased to hear that an up to date white paper has been prepared, and I assume this will be made available to members of the house shortly, probably later today. Again, it will not be possible to study this adequately in the time available, presumably over the dinner hour, and I am afraid I shall not be in a position to comment on the details of the particular scheme set out in the white paper.

I was pleased to hear the hon. lady say there is to be a joint committee set up to consider this question. However, I feel the Prime Minister should have reconsidered his position in this regard as of yesterday when he replied to a question addressed to him by myself. At that time I asked whether he would consider sending the bill to committee before it received second reading. His answer was to the effect that he hoped the bill would receive second reading and then go to the committee. We understand that the committee is now to be a joint committee.

I do not feel this is good enough. In a matter as complex and important as a Canada pension plan we need to have the fullest inquiry possible before second reading when the bill itself would be approved. At that point it becomes a matter of political necessity on the part of the government to put the bill through practically unchanged. I feel the Prime Minister should have reconsidered the stand he was taking, and I would recommend to him an article by Mr. John Meyer which appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of February 24 of this year. This article began as follows:

Prime Minister Pearson, having first promised public and expert scrutiny of the Canada pension plan, now promises passage of the plan in the current session.

It goes on to indicate that the Prime Minister has given two impressions as to his feelings in this respect. I feel the right hon. gentleman should read this article with great care because there are other suggestions in it which affect this argument; I do not intend to go into detail now.

I want to impress, first of all, upon the House of Commons and upon the country the fact that the Progressive Conservative party is 100 per cent behind a Canada pension plan. There are no "ifs" "ands" or "buts". Let me make it abundantly clear. We wish to see a comprehensive contributory plan brought in at the earliest opportunity. We want to see the bill, and we want to see it as soon as possible. We are most anxious to have it in our hands so as to give it the close study which even the government concedes it will require. This plan has been widely discussed and written about for many months, as the minister stated, and we in this party feel no further purpose can be served by delaying and arguing over the resolution at this time. We certainly do not intend to hold up the introduction of the bill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Monteith: We want the bill introduced at once so that we can study the plan in great detail and determine to what extent it does or does not provide a good pension for all Canadians.

I wonder if I might call it five o'clock?

The Chairman: It being five o'clock it is my duty to leave the chair in order that the house may proceed with private members' business pursuant to section 3 of standing order 15.

PENSIONS

CANADA PLAN—TABLING OF WHITE PAPER

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Minister of National Health and Welfare): May I have leave to revert to motions, Mr. Speaker?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Miss LaMarsh: Before the house proceeds to the next item of business may I have leave to table the document to which I referred during the proceedings in the committee of the whole and ask leave, as well, to have the said document printed as an appendix to today's *Hansard*?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Churchill: Is that the white paper? Is the white paper not available now, prior to this debate continuing?