

*Canada Pension Plan*

as I did not see him rise I will proceed to make a few remarks with respect to the bill before us. In the first instance I want to indicate that because there are a number of bad features in the bill, because, as the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) and others have pointed out, it is not really adequate enough for the people of Canada, my support of the bill is conditional at this stage. I say "conditional" because this bill is to be referred to a committee where presumably there will be an extensive presentation of briefs and arguments for or against either the bill itself or with respect to particular provisions in it and I would hope that as a result of the work of this committee and the examination given to this legislation the bill will be reported back in a better form than the one in which we see it now. It is with this in mind that I say the support I give to it is conditional and qualified.

A number of people have indicated—I will not name them at the moment—that because we have raised doubts about the efficacy of certain provisions in this measure, because we have sought to point out where the bill fails and the extent to which it fails, we are really opposed to the bill itself. In order to prevent any attempt at misrepresentation of this sort we hope at the conclusion of the debate when the vote is taken to have a recorded vote so that everyone in the house may have an opportunity to stand and be counted either for or against this measure, because we know from past experience that politicians, being what they are, tend to take a position and misrepresent and distort it for their own political advantage. We would not like that sort of thing to occur with respect to the particular item before us.

A number of members have spoken about this bill as though they really believe in their hearts that it will finally be enacted as the law of Canada. There is some doubt, at least in my mind, that this bill will ever get on the statute books of this country. It is one of the most important that parliament has had before it for many, many years. It is also one of the most complex. It affects, or will affect, every person in Canada. It affects too a great number of organizations, companies and corporations across this country to a far greater extent than has any other single bill in recent years. Millions of people are concerned with the legislation and will be involved in it. There is the relationship between the plan proposed and private plans. While at the moment there seems to be some solution to

this problem there will, nevertheless, in the future be continuing concern about this relationship. There is the possibility of provinces enacting their own plans. There is the influence of the attitude of the various insurance companies of Canada, and there are the billions upon billions of dollars involved as well as the way in which this money will be used during the time it is contained within the fund.

Because we are at this particular point of our proceedings approaching, perhaps, a Christmas recess; because we are approaching, perhaps, the prorogation of this session in anticipation of the start of another, and because a number of Liberal cabinet ministers in recent weeks have been making noises at public gatherings about the possibility of an election in the early months of next year, we could be facing the dissolution of this parliament. We all know what would happen to any piece of legislation before parliament or before a committee should dissolution take place. It would be the end of it. In accordance with our normal practice should even the prorogation of this session take place in readiness for the start of a new session in the early part of the year, this too would mean the death of the bill now before us—it would have to be started all over again. There is a way out—and I commend it to the government—in the report of the committee on procedure submitted a few weeks ago to the effect that we should not have a new session of parliament but merely a recess, in order that the committee charged with the responsibility for considering this bill might have as long as possible in which to carry out its work and hear witnesses, and so that this parliament would still have the bill in existence at the time when the committee reports its proceedings. Failure to make such an arrangement would simply mean that when we do begin another session of parliament we shall have to start all over again from scratch; the bill would have to be preceded by a resolution, given first reading, and we should be back again doing what we are doing today. That seems to me to be a senseless waste of time, especially when one is dealing with a subject as vitally important as is the Canada pension plan presently before us.

If, as is expected, the government intends on its own initiative to ask for the dissolution of this parliament some time in the early months of next year with the result,