

Canada Pension Plan

that after the words "kept therein" words such as these might be inserted, "and used or maintained for the purpose of this act". The provision then would relate directly to payroll records. There would be no blanket authority to pick up any book that might be in an office.

It does not help us for the minister to give the assurance that the only books that would be looked at would be payroll records. Ministers come and go; they do not last forever. This minister, of course, may set that out as his policy, but subsequent ministers may not agree with it. The law should protect the citizen. The law should state clearly and accurately what is intended. I was not impressed too greatly by the minister's suggestion that other legislation contained similar clauses relating to the inspection and seizure of books. Just because something is written into one statute, it does not follow that the same section should be written into another. The original one may be wrong or parliament may have made a mistake, and it does not matter which administration it was. Every year we amend the various statutes of Canada either because something has been omitted or because there has been poor wording or there is a loophole in the law, something of that nature. It is quite customary to change the wording of statutes. It is for this reason I would reject the argument that just because some statute or other has similar words they should be in this one.

I am appealing to the minister to be reasonable. I should like to hear him say that he is quite content to stand this section; that he will confer with the people on this side who have put forward these suggestions. I am willing to guarantee that a form of consultation will result in a wording that will be generally acceptable. This has happened in the past. I believe it is the best method of dealing with this provision which has aroused controversy, rather than taking the stand the minister has taken that he is not going to make any suggestions whatever with regard to an amendment. I have confidence in the officials who do the most difficult work connected with the government, namely that of drafting bills. I believe that they would be able, in consultation with the interested members, to come up with a form of wording that would be more satisfactory.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, there are other members who wish to speak on this subject. However, there is one point I should like to raise at this time. I think it is the foundation

for most of the objection to this provision. The minister stated that a similar provision is contained in the Estate Tax Act which was enacted under the previous Conservative government. There is such a vast difference between that legislation and this that I do not believe they should be compared. This legislation for the Canada pension plan is all embracing; it goes far beyond anything in any other statute dealing with the financial affairs of the citizens of Canada, including the Income Tax Act. The Income Tax Act has certain limitations, but this bill will cover almost every adult person in Canada. Its application is broad and covers the whole field, and it is for this reason it is most important that these clauses which relate to interference with books, records and writings should not be extended.

I notice that the minister of health and welfare is somewhat encouraged by my statement that this is a broad and all embracing statute. I did not mean that in the sense in which she took it.

Miss LaMarsh: Mr. Chairman, I am encouraged by the fact that the hon. member has finally realized, as he has just stated, that this act will cover almost every adult in Canada.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, I did not use the word "cover", I said "affect"; and I am sure it does, because in the minister's efforts to find out whether under her plan some poor soul who only earns \$600 a year is to be made to pay his pittance, under our plan she has canvassed the whole area. I suggest there is quite a difference and that when we get down to the facts of the matter we find that her plan does take money from individuals with very low incomes. That is the difference between her plan and our plan. However, Mr. Chairman, I am digressing and I will return to the subject matter of this clause.

The application of this plan extends right down to the very lowest income. Even when an individual only has casual earnings, if those earnings are received from an employer, he is affected by the plan. This legislation is broad in its application and affects the whole field in Canada and should not, therefore, result in this type of interference.

Let us consider the Estate Tax Act for a moment. This act is related to estates of deceased individuals, which are presumably in some state of suspension. We all realize that following the death of an individual there is a period of time during which the estate has to be settled and taxed, but that is not the situation as far as the Canada pension plan is