

Canada Pension Plan

On clause 22—Amount to be deducted and remitted by employer.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, in connection with clause 22 of the bill which we are now discussing, relating to contributions and benefits, I should like to make several remarks. I feel I should do so as the result of a statement containing figures and tables made yesterday by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I undertook at the time the hon. member filed those tables to examine the comparisons he made and comment on them. I think it would be proper for me to do so during our consideration of this clause.

Mr. Chairman, using a word which I seldom use and which I dislike using, I should like to say that the figures the hon. member has produced are phony because they are based on the comparisons of different figures calculated on different premises. The hon. member has proposed an amendment to old age security which would necessitate the raising of \$455 million per year. He does not state directly how or where that money will be raised, and I suggest to him that if we took \$455 million from our general taxes, in addition to what we propose to raise under the Canada pension plan, we too could produce some very attractive figures. We are not suggesting that by our amendment, but are basing our figures on the collections which are being proposed by the Canada pension plan now under consideration.

Mr. Knowles: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Aiken: Certainly.

The Chairman: Order, please. May we have order in the committee.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, I recognize the hon. member's right to disagree with what we are suggesting in column 3 of the various tables I placed on the record yesterday, and I agree with his right to ask questions as to how we propose to pay for what we are suggesting, but will the hon. member indicate one instance in support of his contention that my figures are phony? Are those figures not exact representations of what would happen, first, under the bill as it stands, second, as a result of my hon. friend's proposal, with which I disagree but which I do not call phony, and third, under our proposal? What is wrong with the figures themselves?

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, the figures themselves are all based on different premises, and one cannot take one set of figures based on certain revenue collections and compare them

with another set of figures based on different revenue collections. I am merely suggesting that the hon. member cannot use his plan, taking \$455 million out of general revenue, and then state that he is proposing a better plan. The mathematical calculations which my hon. friend has made may be correct, but he bases those calculations on different propositions.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask one more question. Does the hon. member admit that so far as he has been able to check them, the mathematical calculations are accurate?

Mr. Aiken: No, I cannot admit that.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, may I ask—

Mr. Aiken: No, you have asked your last question.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege. If the hon. member is not prepared to admit that my calculations are correct, will he point out a single calculation that is incorrect?

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, one cannot answer a specious argument of this kind. I suggest the hon. member's figures are based on entirely different revenue collections. If we suggested that we were going to collect an extra billion dollars, we certainly could afford to pay \$150 a month more in old age security. However, that proposal is based on entirely different revenue collections which the hon. member suggests are to be made from somewhere, although he does not indicate just where. The hon. member does not say how this money is to be obtained, but suggests only that it will come from the people as a result of some sort of revenue collection, either through income tax or on a different taxation formula. The hon. member suggests the method is not important; they are going to raise \$455 million in addition to what will be collected under the terms of the Canada pension plan and pay better pensions. One could use any figure at all and suggest that a better pension plan could be established, but I am suggesting that the figures produced by the hon. member cannot be compared in this way. He has taken three different sets of circumstances and attempted to compare the three different plans. For that reason I cannot admit that his mathematical calculations are correct.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask just one more question, and I will make it a short one. Have I made any mathematical mistakes in what I have done in respect of what will happen under the plan proposed by the hon. member, and I refer to the middle column