

the bill and passed on second reading. It seems to me that the amendments proposed by the hon. member go beyond the scope of the clause under consideration. I think they are a new proposition.

I think there is merit in the comment of the minister that this proposal is so different that perhaps it should be brought forward in an entirely new legislative measure. I think the House would expect the Chair to look at a matter such as this as subjectively as possible, which is what I have done, and I cannot see how procedurally I can accept the motions and put them to the House. I, therefore, suggest at this time that we put motion No. 3 and postpone any procedural debate on other possible difficulties until later. With the consent of the House, the Chair will at this time put motion No. 3, in the name of the hon. member for Crowfoot.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot) moved:

That Bill C-190, an act to amend the Canada Pension Plan, be amended in clause 1 by deleting the words "general level" in line 13 at page 3 and substituting therefor the words:

"Canadian standard".

● (1600)

He said: It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that we are dealing with the motion listed as No. 3, which deals particularly with Clause 1 appearing at page 3 of the bill relating to the general level of living.

The bill sets out an exemption in respect of certain members of the Canadian community who will not be paying into the Canada pension plan and will not be drawing pensions when they become pensionable, that is widows, disabled or those of retirement age. It sets certain members of the Canadian community aside and says they no longer have to make contributions so, naturally, they will no longer receive pensions.

The minister has to satisfy himself that these people belong to certain religious organizations which have certain tenets and teachings. I understand in this case it is the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Stanbury) rather than the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) who must be satisfied that the dependents of these people will be supported to their general level of living.

Surely, there is not a member of this House who would like to see the establishment of certain ghettos in our Canadian community which would be reduced to living on a lower standard than other Canadians, but surely this is the danger we are facing. Certain people provide for themselves in a very meagre manner. They live a very plain and simple life as their teaching instructs them. What this bill provides is that they must maintain the general level of living to which they are accustomed.

We in our society continually boast that our standard of living is improving, and that we are now second to the United States or perhaps second to Sweden, but we continue to hope that our standard of living will continue to improve. I have been trying to equate our standard of living with something that can be easily understood, but I think it is something different to different people. By this bill, we are suggesting that these people can continue to exist at the level to which they have been accustomed as

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far back as their beginnings in the early 1500's in Czechoslovakia.

To my way of thinking, we will be creating, by the adoption of this bill, ghettos with a lower standard of living for certain segments of our Canadian population, and I believe this is a mistake. The amendment substitutes certain things for what is referred to here as "their general level of living". What is meant in Canada by "the standard of living"? I suggest it has something to do with education, something to do with our birth rate, something to do with the number of deaths per thousand births and so on. I suggest it also has something to do with the wellbeing of the individuals of our society. Are they free to do what they want or are they contained by certain strict laws or regulations?

If we pass this bill in its present form, I suggest we will be turning a blind eye to what might well become a serious problem in years ahead. I was disappointed that representatives of a second group of people in Canada were not asked to appear before the committee considering this matter. There are two obvious groups which will seek exemption under this clause. One of the groups is the Old Mennonite Order in Ontario, representatives of which did appear before the committee. The other group which will seek exemption is that group of Hutterites in western Canada. There are more than 30 colonies in the province of Alberta, some 20 colonies in the province of Manitoba and probably in excess of 10 colonies in the province of Saskatchewan.

I would like to examine representatives of those groups to find out exactly what is their general level of living and what is meant by this term. I think this is important because those who belong to the Old Order of Mennonites live as individuals farming their own lands, whereas those who belong to the Hutterian Brethren on the Prairies live in a communal way, and they are strictly confined to living in those communes. Their education is confined to that provided by the commune. I was disappointed that the acting chairman of the committee did not feel obliged to call representatives of that group before the committee, and I was disappointed that I was called away from the committee to make a speech in the House on the matter of CNR financing. I feel that, in a way, the committee members were not very diligent in their duties in not asking that representatives of that group be called before the committee to justify this request for exemption.

The argument has been advanced that their standard of living has been good enough for them and, therefore, we as parliamentarians should not interfere. I wonder if this attitude would have been all right 100 years ago in respect of our Indians, and whether it would be all right today in respect to the Canadian Eskimo in the north. I suggest that we say it is not all right and that we must show these people the modern white man's way of living today. We suggest that we will take away their dogs and give them ski-doo's, and that our ways are better. On the other hand, we are saying to these groups that their standard of living is good enough as long as they do not interfere with us.

That is all well and good, but we must remember that people are leaving these groups and coming into the general Canadian community with a much lower standard of education and a much different concept. It might be said