

good many of the matters included in the bill before you start questioning me on matters of Government policy.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): It seems to me that there is one question of public policy on which we should be clear before the minister leaves. I wonder if you would outline to us the factors which induced the Government to decide to integrate the Public Service Superannuation Act, and other acts, and the Canada Pension Plan, rather than to stack it?

Hon. Mr. BENSON: Well, the Civil Service pension in Canada is a pension plan to which civil servants contribute $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and in the case of females 5 per cent. When the matter of the Canada Pension Plan came up the Government was faced with a decision as to whether or not it should be stacked or there should be integration. At that time they consulted the Civil Service national organizations and the Advisory Committee on the Public Service Superannuation Act which includes the staff side and representatives of Government. The decision was made that in view of the relatively high contributions and the fact that the Civil Service pension in Canada is one of the better ones in the western world, employees would rather have a pension integrated than stacked. I know Mr. Knowles, who is here, argues we should not have let them do this, but I think the decision really is an employee decision arrived at after full consultation with employer organizations.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Has any consideration been given to an escalation clause in the public Service Superannuation Act so that it would have a genuine integration of the Canada Pension Plan?

Hon. Mr. BENSON: No. Here we get into a matter of what should happen in pension plans throughout the country. I think the Canada Pension Plan, by attaching somewhat of an escalation factor, has started a precedent in the country. It was a precedent, however, that the Government did not want to follow or feel it should follow in dealing with this pension plan which, as you know, is a funded pension plan for employees of the Government service.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Is the Government giving consideration to other legislation such as the federal Public Service Pension Adjustment Act, as you call it?

Hon. Mr. BENSON: I can only assure you that the problem of all retired civil servants, and indeed of older people in Canada is receiving active Government consideration seriously, and has been for some time. We cannot help but be considering it seriously.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): The honourable minister is more encouraging than the Minister of Finance, I am glad to hear.

Hon. Mr. BENSON: If you want an argument in regard to adjusting pension plans after people retire, it is that the Government pension plan is funded like hundreds of other pension plans in the country, in which the amount that people get out of the pension plan is based on their contribution, and there is no automatic escalation built into it.

Mr. CHATTERTON: If you tell us, for instance, that you are considering legislation such as the Public Service Pension Adjustment Act—

Hon. Mr. BENSON: The problem is under constant consideration and review. There are arguments both ways. I think the Minister of Finance has given the