

Canada Pension Plan

to portability. It may be unrelated here, but inasmuch as a statement was made with regard to numbering I wonder whether the minister could make a comment in this regard.

Miss LaMarsh: Mr. Chairman, if there is a comparable scheme, the agreement which will be negotiated, as I said an hour ago, as I said 35 minutes ago, as I said 45 minutes ago, as I said 15 minutes ago and as I said 20 minutes ago, will be such as to enable the province of Quebec to be part of an over-all numbering scheme, as they have indicated is their wish.

Mr. Winkler: The minister has just verified what I said she said earlier. But let us not get around the questioning in that way; the minister must learn to be a little more patient and courteous, instead of making smart remarks about the way we ask questions.

Mr. Lloyd: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, the hon. member who has just spoken is making imputations about the motivations of the minister. He should ask a question, demonstrate his ability to phrase it, and then get on with the business before the committee.

Mr. Winkler: That is exactly what I did and the minister skirted around answering my question. I would suggest that the senior member for Halifax must be included with the junior member for Halifax and I must call him brash as well. He should also learn patience.

If I bring the committee back to a degree of sanity for a moment I would ask the minister the question once more. Is there any specific agreement or any understanding regarding portability as there is regarding numbering? I think one is related to the other and the question is important. Is there some understanding with regard to portability?

Miss LaMarsh: Yes.

Mr. Winkler: That is the most sensible thing you have said all day.

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Labour. Since the Minister of Labour has said that his department has collected the numbers for the province of Quebec, I should like to know whether his department is going to assume the responsibility of securing numbers for self-employed persons and also farmers in the province of Quebec, who up to now do not have any social security number.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Chairman, as my hon. friend will realize, very large numbers of the citizens of Quebec have already secured social insurance numbers. The recipients of unemployment insurance, the insured population as well as others voluntarily have secured a social insurance number. The facilities of the unemployment insurance commission will be available for the further registration of self-employed persons or farmers either in the province of Quebec or in any other part of Canada. Persons who wish to come forward are able to obtain a number.

Mr. Ricard: I should like a more specific answer to my question. My question is clear. I want to know from the minister whether his department is going to assume responsibility for supplying social insurance numbers to those who, up to this date, do not have one, as his department has done for those who voluntarily come into the scheme. I want to know whether his department will take the responsibility for numbering the rest of the population of the province of Quebec which up to now are not numbered.

Mr. MacEachen: Naturally, with the consent and agreement of the province of Quebec.

Mr. Ricard: I should like to know whether there is any agreement between the minister's department and the province of Quebec with regard to this question. I should also like to ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare whether there is an agreement as to the date of the entering into force of the plan of the province of Quebec. Is the plan of the province of Quebec going to come into force on the same date as the plan of the federal government?

Mr. MacEachen: Clause 103 provides that the minister may enter into an agreement with the government of a province which on its own account is providing for a pension plan. So surely when both plans have been passed by the respective legislatures, or by the legislature of the province and the parliament of Canada, the minister will then enter into an agreement which provides for the circumstances under which these numbers can be interchanged. That is all clause 103 deals with. My understanding is that because the officials of the unemployment insurance commission advised me that there is an understanding with the province of Quebec that these numbers will be interchangeable, the numbers which have been issued and gathered by the unemployment insurance