

Canada Pension Plan

new Canada pension plan. I think the governments, be it the present one or its predecessors, would gain by calling upon popularizers of legal documents, that is, specialists who could write the legislation we have to pass in words everybody could understand. Do not forget that, when passed, the bill will have to be applied by employees of the Department of National Health and Welfare or the Department of National Revenue, who will not have the legal training required to interpret its provisions correctly, which will result in complications both for the staff of those departments and for the people who, some day, should benefit from the measure.

Therefore, what is missing—and I am speaking not only about the bill which is now before us, but about every bill which is passed by this house—is popularizers of texts who will offer to the understanding of all a simple and easily accessible draft which, subsequently, will not give rise to a misinterpretation of the law.

Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to speak at length on this bill because it is another federal act which will not affect Quebec. And it is not the first one either, because during this session we have passed many bills which will concern nine provinces, but not Quebec. We only have to look at legislation passed this year to see that this has happened in several other cases.

In most cases, the bills passed will not apply to the province of Quebec. For instance the legislation concerning student loans will not apply to the province of Quebec; the legislation concerning the Canada pension plan will apply in nine provinces, but not in the province of Quebec; the legislation concerning the \$10 allowance to children 16 to 17 years of age applies to nine provinces but will not apply to the province of Quebec.

In the final analysis, during this session we will only have passed legislation concerning nine provinces, and I was forgetting the Crop Insurance Act which does not apply to the province of Quebec.

This will be a session where members of parliament representing ten provinces will have passed legislation applying to nine provinces only.

Therefore, why not sanction officially facts which are becoming increasingly numerous by radical changes in our constitution? That is a question which arises.

I think we are following the British mentality, that is we are proceeding by way of precedents. We are passing legislation which is not applicable to the province of Quebec,

[Mr. Grégoire.]

and by always proceeding by way of precedents and jurisprudence, we finally decide that it is best for everybody and the facts are sanctioned by precedents.

The facts are there. The Ottawa government legislates for nine provinces in some fields and it takes 20 years to set up a jurisprudence around these cases which are sanctioned at a given time. But the situation being as it is in the province of Quebec, it is impossible to wait 15 or 20 years, because the kettle is boiling over.

The present legislation, especially the measure introduced today, should serve as an example to hasten the sanction of facts, namely that the Ottawa parliament exists for nine provinces, but not for ours. Let the tenth province, Quebec, organize its own programs and act on its own. It is on that one condition that in many areas an understanding will be possible which will strengthen the structure of an altogether changed confederation.

Our intention is not to delay the debate, of course. This legislation does not apply to our province but as we want to co-operate with the other provinces, we intend to see to it that it is passed as soon as possible, since the other provinces want it. We do not want to stretch out such a debate. On the contrary, we want to prove that we are ready to co-operate with the other provinces in order to enable them to take advantage of this pension plan as soon as possible.

But one thing is certain; this pension plan constitutes a new tax for Canadians on whom the tax burden weighs so heavily already. It will be a tax which will serve to accumulate funds, and finally, when the time comes to receive a pension under this plan, it will be our children who will pay for the amounts we will receive in 25, 30 or 35 years.

However, there are two points I would like to deal with for a few minutes.

One of them, which may be of interest to the province of Quebec, is that there are at this time, pension plans in operation in various plants and industries. The contributions paid those trade unions by their members have to a great extent been transferred to international unions. The amounts thus contributed to international unions under those pension plans are now largely in the United States. Now—and this applies to contributions paid into international union funds with regard to pension plans in the province of Quebec as well as in the other provinces—is the federal government ready to take the means to bring home those funds and contributions which were paid into pension funds and are now in the United States?