

Canada Pension Plan

Mr. Speaker: Order. Before putting the motions which are before the House at the present time, I think I should refer, first of all, to two of them, motions one and two in the name of the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). The Chair has studied these motions and has some reservations as to their procedural acceptability. There is, to my way of thinking, a distinct possibility that these motions are beyond the scope of clause one which they seek to amend. I would be pleased to hear whether hon. members wish to enlighten and guide the Chair as to the acceptability or regularity of these two motions. If after hearing hon. members my judgment is confirmed, then these two motions cannot be put, in which case I suggest we proceed with motion No. 3, which I believe also stands in the name of the hon. member for Crowfoot.

● (1550)

Mr. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I should like to rise to speak to your point of order in which you suggested that you are, if I understood you correctly, in doubt as to whether motions Nos. 1 and 2 are in fact in order. Basically, motion No. 1 provides for the deletion of provisions relating to certain tenets and teachings, and substitutes the provision that anyone who can prove that he or she has an assured income and can look after themselves in their later years should be given the same opportunity as those of certain religious faiths. I really do not see how this is beyond the scope of the bill; it makes the bill applicable to all Canadians.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I take it that at this moment we are discussing the procedural acceptability of motion No. 1.

Mr. Speaker: I suggest to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, as I suggested a moment ago to the hon. member for Crowfoot, that motions Nos. 1 and 2 appear to be in doubt for the same reason. This is why I mentioned both. If the hon. member wants to argue separately the two proposed motions, I am prepared to allow him to do so; but what I suggested was that if these two amendments were found to be out of order, we then proceed with motion No. 3, which appears to be in order, at least as far as the Chair is concerned and unless arguments are submitted to the contrary.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to make my brief remarks respecting motions Nos. 1 and 2 at the same time. My previous comment was simply that I thought we were dealing with No. 1 only.

It seems to me that both these amendments, Nos. 1 and 2, are in effect amendments to the original act rather than to the amending bill. They propose to introduce into the Canada Pension Plan, the original act, conditions that are not there, namely the requirement of Canadian citizenship and the making of certain insurance or annuity arrangements. It is for that reason that I support Your Honour's view that both these amendments are not in order.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, without discussing the merits of these amendments in any way, I must say I find the argument of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre rather strange. The object of Bill

[Mr. Lalonde.]

C-190 is to introduce an exception to the general category of persons who shall pay premiums to the Canada Pension Plan. It categorizes certain people who shall not pay. The hon. member for Crowfoot has merely introduced a restriction, and if there is to be a limitation on, or a closer definition of, those people who are going to be excepted, then it has to be introduced by way of an amendment at this stage. It certainly could not be introduced as an amendment to the original act.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): This is not a restriction. It goes further.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): This is a restriction on the category of people who are going to be exempted from the provisions of the act by Bill C-190. In essence, the hon. member for Crowfoot is simply saying that these people have to be more closely defined by the minister by the introduction of a restriction on those exempted. With the greatest respect, in all logic I cannot see how an amendment can be introduced other than at this time. I am not saying one way or the other whether the exemption of the hon. member for Crowfoot is a right one, but procedurally I cannot fault him.

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I should like merely to say a few words on the procedural aspects of the first two motions. It seems to me that the motions named by the hon. member considerably extend the very narrow limits set in this bill whose subject matter is to restrict it to certain religious groups whose some tenet of their faith prohibit them from contributing to group insurance plans.

As drafted, the hon. member's amendment would considerably extend those limits, not only to groups but especially to individuals, and also greatly expand the scope of the bill.

Indeed, the subject matter of the bill is so much extended that it seems to be effectively altered and that we are now moving a proposal which is, for all practical purposes, entirely different from the subject matter of the bill already considered by the House. Consequently, I feel that such an amendment should rather be moved as a private bill.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Crowfoot has already submitted his argument.

Mr. Horner (Crowfoot): I have an additional argument.

Mr. Speaker: I do not want to be unfair to him, but having given the matter serious thought before suggesting at this time that I had some reservations procedurally in relation to these two amendments, I am sure the hon. member will appreciate I would not have made this suggestion unless I had felt we should take another very close look at them.

I think the point made by the Minister of National Health and Welfare is worth considering. I have looked at motions Nos. 1 and 2 and to me they appear to be defective in that they purport to substitute a financial qualification in lieu of a requirement of a religious nature, as set out in