

*Canada Pension Plan*

among other things, for the payment of retirement pensions beginning at any age between 65 and 70 years; for the payment of pensions to surviving spouses beginning at any age from 65 years; for the progressive establishment of full pensions over an initial period of ten years; for the co-ordination of pensions payable under the Old Age Security Act with pensions payable under the Canada pension plan and for the payment of adjusted pensions under the Old Age Security Act beginning at any age from 65 years; and to provide further that all expenditures under the Canada pension plan, including costs of administration, shall be financed from contributions by employees, employers and self employed persons.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Lamoureux in the chair.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Mr. Chairman, I am pleased today to have the opportunity, even at this late hour, to introduce into this house a resolution proposing the introduction of a comprehensive system of contributory retirement pensions, the Canada pension plan. Hon. members will recall that a resolution very similar to this one was introduced into the house in July of last year. At the time of its introduction I tabled and the house ordered printed in *Hansard*, a so-called white paper, which was the scheme of the bill to be introduced, couched in non-legal language. This was provided in order to assist members in ready comprehension of this highly technical matter. It served also to provide a basis for discussion with provincial governments.

Those discussions began at the end of July. They were continued at a conference with provincial ministers and their technical advisers early in September last. There were further technical discussions at the official level with Ontario and Quebec. And then, at the full federal-provincial conference last November, there was a long discussion of the government's plans with the premiers of the provinces, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister.

In addition, during the eight months since the introduction of the 1963 resolution, the Canada pension plan has been exhaustively discussed by interested groups across the country. Much of this discussion has found its way into the public press. There can be very few occasions when the intentions of a government have been so fully discussed prior to the introduction of the actual legislation into parliament. Our proposals have produced wide interest and, I think, increasingly favourable support. Members will have noted the three tabled returns made in response to motion Nos. 84, 88 and 105 which comprise more than 700 folios of correspondence on the subject. Many members will also be aware that important national organizations, such as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union

[Miss LaMarsh.]

and the Canadian Labour Congress, have expressed themselves in favour of the pension plan.

The wide discussion of pensions has been welcomed by the government, for our hope is to produce the best possible retirement plan for Canadians generally.

Since the second world war, private pension schemes have burgeoned in Canada. Some of these schemes were designed and paid for entirely by management, but many of the biggest were the product of labour negotiation and are considered a part of the wage package. It is now estimated that approximately 1,800,000 Canadian workers have some type of private pension arrangements.

These schemes are making an important contribution to improved security. But it also soon became apparent that those who are not covered by private schemes, and those who worked through the depression years when they could make at best only meagre provision for their own retirement, were facing an increasingly difficult future. This gave impetus to a study in parliament as to the action which ought to be taken to provide elderly Canadian citizens with some measure to meet their retirement needs. A joint committee of both houses exhaustively explored the available alternatives and concluded by recommending that a pension payment of \$40 per month should be made to every person who attained the age of 70. Since this is taxable income, those with substantially greater incomes return part through taxation.

In order to effect this major departure, permission for a constitutional amendment had to be sought from the provinces. It was obtained and pensions thus became a field of concurrent federal-provincial jurisdiction.

The \$40, as everyone in the chamber knows, has been increased, most recently by this parliament to \$75. It is surely now apparent that we must seek an additional approach if we are to achieve the goal of providing real retirement benefits for Canadian workers. As the amount of the old age security, sometimes called the flat rate pension, has risen, its limitations have become more apparent. In some parts of Canada, the aged parents in a family receive more cash income than is brought to the family financial pot by the family breadwinner. In low-income, low-cost areas, the retirement benefit seems relatively large. At the same time, at the other end of the scale, no matter what reasonable increase may be legislated, by this or successive parliaments, it is never enough to provide an adequate subsistence for the aged, who have no other resources in the high cost urban areas where more and more of them live. There is, therefore, increasing public awareness that our retirement