

*Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)*

screws to the federal superannuates. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon):

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor: "Bill C-133, an Act to amend the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2), be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time this day six months hence".

This will allow time for consultation to take place.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. The amendment is acceptable; therefore I shall put it to the House immediately. It is moved by Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton), seconded by Mr. McKinnon:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor: "Bill C-133, an Act to amend the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2), be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time this day six months hence".

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Just so that I understand the procedures and Members know what we are doing, I take it that we are now discussing the amendment of the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). He is the first speaker on that amendment. We are not speaking to the motion of the Minister on Bill C-133. Is the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton going to be allowed to answer questions when he has finished his remarks?

• (1130)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** The Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) is the responder to the Government motion. Speaking immediately after the Minister, he is entitled to unlimited time. The fact that he has presented an amendment to the motion does not, in the Chair's opinion, preclude in any way his right to speak for an unlimited period of time.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, therefore I take it your answer is that there will be no questions put to the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** That would be the Chair's understanding of the new Permanent and Provisional Standing Orders.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I hope when I am finished that the Hon. Member will not have any questions to put to me. I believe he and I are *ad idem* with respect to this Bill. I repeat that the purpose of it is to allow the kind of consultation which ought to have taken place with respect to the Bill in fact to take place.

Before Mr. Speaker rose, I was about to say that if one reads the evidence before the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, one would support this motion. One should consider the evidence of the interunion people who appeared before the Committee representing a large number of Public Service unions, the evidence of postal workers and of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. They put briefs in on the merits of the Bill, certainly, and disputed the merits of the Bill. The common thread through all briefs was that the period of consultation should have taken place but did not. If anyone in the House really believes that consultation is a good thing,

whether he is a Liberal, Conservative or New Democrat, I hope he will support the motion because it is important.

We have talked about what happened in the community and about the forces therein separating one interest group from the other. This is true, and our country suffers from it. We are seeing evidence of it right now.

I want to move on to another matter. I suggest that it might be appropriate if I put on the record a sampling from the thick file I have mentioned of the views of people with respect to the Bill, and why making the widest possible period of time available for consultation is important. The first letter to which I will refer was written by a retired public servant and is directed to the Minister. He wrote:

—have you considered the spirit of this, one of our laws that we elect a Government to protect? Have you considered how such flouting of a Government contract could affect the image of a democratic Government . . . Whenever the Government decides to cut costs, however, it appears that its own lowest level workers and pensioners are the first, if not the only ones, to become the scapegoats, and bear the brunt. A good many of us, now superannuated, were red-circled some years ago when the Government decided that such action was warranted.

He put the following question:

Did it really help our economy or reduce our debt?

I put that question to the House. Did it? Is the deficit any lower as a result of this? I ask my colleagues to think about it.

I refer to another letter from one of my constituents which was directed to the Minister. He wrote:

I respectfully ask you to give this proposed legislation your sober second thoughts—

In other words, he was asking that we accept my motion. He continued:

—and take appropriate action to prevent it from passing.

I have recently completed 35 years of pensionable service in the Public Service of Canada and was quite prepared to manage in retirement on my reduced income under the existing pension plus indexing legislation.

I strongly object to this proposed legislation by the Federal Government to chisel an additional 5 per cent from my income.

The Prime Minister in his television address stated that we should trust one another. I retired trusting that the Government would honour its existing legislation.

He speaks for a legion of people in that sense. Another letter which was directed to me read:

We ask for your support in opposing this piece of legislation and in particular the breach of agreement which it represents if passed into law. We are pensioners with 35 years of service in the Public Service of Canada and because of this ill-conceived proposal now feel threatened financially. The indexing of pensions we suggest was a legal agreement which was paid for by the individuals concerned, and for the Government of Canada to now partially withdraw from this agreement is in effect a breach of contract.

Another letter from a constituent read:

It was always my understanding that, while on full salary as a federal public servant, I was paying for indexing which I was to receive at a later date. Now we are told that the Government is to cut the indexing to 6 and 5 per cent . . . Is this legal? And again more recently we hear that the Government . . . the elite Cabinet . . . is contemplating weird and wonderful things with our pension funds. Is it not the sitting Members of the House of Commons who enact the law of the Government and not the "four horsemen" of the Cabinet? These people have nothing to lose as their fortunes are protected. But what about us, who with