

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, January 25, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (1105)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### SUPPLEMENTARY RETIREMENT BENEFITS ACT (NO. 2)

MEASURE TO MODIFY BENEFIT INDEX

**Hon. Herb Gray (President of Treasury Board)**, seconded by Mr. Smith, moved that Bill C-133, an Act to amend the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2), be read the third time and do pass.

**Mr. Nickerson:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Would I not be correct in thinking that it would be necessary for the motion to be seconded by a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** I thank the Hon. Member for his comment, but that is not necessary.

**Mr. Gray:** Mr. Speaker, I said in my speech on second reading—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** The Hon. Member for Yukon is rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, without in any way appearing to be critical of the Chair, I seem to recall the practice that a motion of this kind must be seconded by a Minister of the Crown, not by a Parliamentary Secretary and not by any other Government Member. That is why there are always two Ministers in the House at all times. I see the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Fleming) is here now, and perhaps for the sake of order and for the sake of the record the motion should be put, seconded by a Minister of the Crown.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** The President of the Treasury Board is rising on the same point of order?

**Mr. Gray:** Without accepting the correctness of the assertion of the House Leader of the Official Opposition, and without saying this would create a precedent, in order to facilitate the business of the House, I would have no objection to Your Honour calling the motion again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain on the same point of order?

**Mr. Deans:** Mr. Speaker, I do not accept that reasoning, quite frankly. It is either to be done because it is right or it is not to be done because what has been done is correct. It is of

importance that we establish whether it is necessary for a third reading motion to be moved and seconded by Ministers of the Crown, not whether the Minister accedes to the request. I would ask the Chair carefully to review the Standing Orders and the precedents to determine whether the point of order of the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) and the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) is a legitimate one, and to enforce it if it is.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, the Chair might reserve its decision on that matter and inform the House later, following the suggestion of the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans). In the meantime, for the sake of facilitating debate the motion might be put, seconded by a Minister of the Crown.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** I accept the comments of Hon. Members. I find them helpful. The Chair has put the question, in its opinion, properly, but it will take the advice of Hon. Members, doublecheck and notify them later on in the debate. In the meantime I recognize the President of the Treasury Board.

**Mr. Gray:** Mr. Speaker, I said in my speech on second reading that I was certain that deliberations on this Bill would raise a variety of questions on the state of the pension accounts, on the means of funding and financing benefits and on the rate of return on pension accounts, just to name a few. I was quite accurate in these predictions. Also at that time I referred to the relationship between fundamental and long-term changes in Public Service pension arrangements, and the impending national pension process. Since then, of course, the long-awaited green paper has been issued and reform proposals can now be debated in earnest.

One of the most positive aspects of the debate on Bill C-133, with its questioning of federal Government employee pension arrangements, is that it has highlighted the issue of ensuring that public servants' pension measures are on a sound financial footing. This is particularly appropriate at a time when we are entering the era of national pension reform.

• (1110)

A second positive result of the debate is that there is a greater appreciation of the issues among all concerned, Public Service pensioners, Government employees and employee associations, Members of Parliament and others, issues associated with the funding and financing of the federal Government's plans for its employees. As well, it is most