

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

Motion No. 2 agreed to.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher)** moved that the Bill as amended, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher)** moved that the Bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with special pride that I speak once more on Bill C-116 on third reading. As Members know Bill C-116 amends both the Canada Pension Plan and the Federal Court Act.

I want to thank at the outset the Chairman of the Standing Committee, the Member for Oxford (Mr. Halliday) who chaired this committee, the committee members, and as well my critics from the Liberal and the NDP Party who have been most helpful in their suggestions and co-operative in their work in attempting to get this legislation passed before the House rises for summer in order that the plans can be put together in a practical way so benefits for January 1, 1987, might take place.

When I presented this legislation to the House of Commons two weeks ago I stated that it represented the culmination of several years of co-operation and consultation among Canadians on the subject of pension reform. Since the Bill's introduction I have listened with interest to concerns regarding the legislation, points which have been expressed in the House and in the committee. I have already taken the opportunity to respond directly and explicitly to members of the Opposition Parties on their valid and pertinent questions.

I know that it is uncommon for Ministers to rise in the House and to mention staff members in terms of the work that they have done on the Bill. I intend to break with that tradition this afternoon and mention one Mr. Michael Hatfield for the work he has done on behalf of this Bill. Mr. Hatfield is on my staff, and I think it is not inappropriate to mention his name because at the time the parliamentary task force on pension review was looking at this issue, during the previous administration, Mr. Hatfield was asked to come on as a member of that task force, that is as an adviser to the task force. Much of the work that was done at that time is finding fruition in this Bill, and I commend him today.

Originally I had intended to discuss these issues today at some length. However, because of time constraints and in light of the agreement which Opposition Members have given support to which will facilitate the Bill's prompt passage I will speak very briefly today.

I refer, for example, to the provisions for the division of the Canada Pension Plan credits on marriage breakdown. There has been criticism that this provision is not automatic and not mandatory. I would like to emphasize that effective January 1, 1987 this provision will be mandatory in all cases of divorce, except in those cases where both spouses have previously and

### *Canada Pension Plan and Federal Court Act*

specifically waived claims on each other's pension rights, and where this agreement is expressly permitted under provincial law, as has just been agreed by this House in approving the motion of the Hon. Member for York Scarborough (Mr. McCrossan). I thank him as well for the work he has done.

As well, it should be noted that the House has also approved a technical amendment to Bill C-116 referring to the disability sections.

I believe it would be useful today for me to repeat the four concerns which dominated the federal-provincial discussions which led to the Canada Pension Plan amendments now embodied in Bill C-116.

The first of these was to maintain the long-term health of the pension plan's fund. The second was to ensure the affordability of premiums paid by working Canadians and their employers. The third was to adapt the benefits to the changing needs of Canadians, and the fourth was to maintain parallelism with the Quebec Pension Plan.

It was mentioned today by the Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone) that there should be further changes made relative to the position of women and their pension plans and spouses allowances. I am well aware of them. I believe the changes the Government brought in earlier on widows, amendments to the Old Age Security Act has helped. I believe this Bill further helps. I think all of us realize that as society is developing and evolving further changes will have to be made. I have committed myself, as Minister of National Health and Welfare, to further discussions in those areas. I make that commitment to the House again today.

A comprehensive information package concerning Bill C-116 has been distributed to all Members of Parliament and to Senators. I would like, therefore, to summarize the main dispositions of the Bill and what the legislation will provide for: first, the development of a 25-year schedule of Canada Pension Plan contribution rates to be reviewed at least every five years; second, a gradual increase in contribution rates from the present 3.6 per cent rate to 7.6 per cent by the year 2011; third, the maintenance of the Canada Pension Plan Fund at a level equal to approximately two years of benefits in the long term; and fourth, actuarially adjusted pensions as early as age 60 or as late as age 70.

● (1210)

In addition, the legislation will provide for increased disability benefits and an easing of the eligibility criteria for them. More work is needed on the question of disability. This is one area of the Canada Pension Plan which has a discretionary aspect, relative to medical advice. We must be sensitive to some of the points made in terms of discerning who is eligible for the disability pension.

As well, the legislation provides new rules governing credit splitting on marriage breakdown, as well as for pension sharing on retirement for married and common law couples; the continuation of survivor benefits on remarriage; improved