

*Motions*

Pension Plan instead of only one, this couple will have greater financial security and tend to retire earlier.

Abolition of compulsory retirement will be of undeniable benefit for women and all other workers whose career has been interrupted or who joined the labour market later in life. If they so wish, those people will have an opportunity to work longer in order to accumulate enough retirement credits to have a decent pension.

On the other hand, doing away with compulsory retirement may help reduce poverty among senior women whose remuneration is not enough for them to be entitled to adequate benefits from a private retirement plan. We have the example of the woman who has chosen to stay at home and raise her children and who is widowed at age 50. Because of inadequate income from her husband's estate, she has to return to the labour force. If she is forced to retire at age 65, she will not have enough time to contribute towards an adequate pension that will cover her needs. Our intent is not to force her to work, Mr. Speaker, but as long as pensions are not provided for women who have chosen to raise a family, that choice should be made available to them.

● (1650)

Moreover, available data show, Mr. Speaker, that doing away with compulsory retirement should not result in a loss of jobs for younger employees.

Since 1981, when the policy in respect of work continuation over age 65 was extended, deputy Ministers were instructed to grant extension applications. The number of employees on extended service has increased, but not as much as might have been expected. For instance, in 1981-82, there were 186 jobs extended beyond age 65. In 1984-85, the number was 567. However, if we compare that figure with the total number of pensioned retirements at age 65 or before, 7,032 in 1984-85, the percentage of job extensions at 8.6 per cent only is not that significant.

Statistics for year 1984-85 also show that the majority of Public Service retirements occur at age 65, namely 1,022, and at age 64 and 65, 1,256 and 1,292 respectively, which apparently indicates that public servants want to retire at an age where they can get full their pension together with social security benefits. You will also note, Mr. Speaker, that the average retirement age in the Public Service in 1984-85 was 61.99 years, a decline relative to year 1983-84 when the age was 62.22 years. However, the average retirement age over the past six years has been 61.85 years. This also shows clearly that the majority of public servants want to retire at an earlier age. Besides compulsory retirement, the Government has also made a clear commitment with respect to recommendations dealing with immigration matters. Thus, concerning the recommendation on permanent residents and assisted relatives, I remind the Hon. Member that the immigration regulations have been amended so that a person who has been a perma-

nent resident in Canada for three years can offer his or her support thus providing to the assisted relative the same advantages as provided by the support given by a Canadian citizen. This amendment which was passed on October 31, 1985, was implemented on January 1, 1986.

Some would perhaps take the Government to task for having turned down an immigration regulation allowing the entry into Canada of common law couples as being legally married. It shows that the Government did not try to evade the issue when for basic considerations, the implementation of some recommendations did not seem proper. Then in the case of a common law couple, the Government, while acknowledging that such recognition would effectively remove any obstacle to their being admitted, has nevertheless recognized the serious hazard in granting entry to applicants who might falsely state that they are cohabiting to gain admission into this country.

Mr. Speaker, as indicated by the Government, in its response to recommendation 35, it is extremely difficult to check abroad whether two persons are actually cohabiting.

Likewise, the Government did not hesitate to state openly its position concerning the recommendation dealing with Public Service competitions. The Government has clearly indicated that it felt that the preference now granted to Canadian citizens is a reasonable and justified restriction under the Charter and the International Agreement on Civil and Political Rights.

The main purpose of this step is to recognize that all of us, you and I and every other Canadian, cherish and appreciate our citizenship which involves some duties such as the promotion of welfare within the community. It also includes a number of rights, including the right to vote, Mr. Speaker. And one of the legitimate benefits of Canadian citizenship must be the right of priority access to jobs within the federal Civil Service. It is only reasonable that we should thus recognize the value and particular importance of Canadian citizenship.

If permanent residents wish to acquire the same rights and duties, they have the possibility to do so by applying for Canadian citizenship. After all, we only ask them to wait three years before they can say they are Canadians and proud of it. Any Canadian citizen has the right to claim certain benefits resulting from Canadian citizenship due to the status which Canadian citizenship confers to citizens. Moreover, Canada is not the only country which feels that its Civil Service should be made up entirely of its own citizens. As a matter of fact, countries such as the United States, France, Great Britain and Australia go even further than Canada, making citizenship a *sine qua non* condition for joining their Civil Services and not merely a criteria for preference as in this country. I should emphasize that, through an international agreement, whoever serves in the foreign service or diplomatic corps of a country must be a citizen of that country.