

Canada Pension Plan and Federal Court Act

that everyone knows what we were talking about; the Bill is hard to get.

Mr. Speaker: Maybe we should charge for it.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the principle of making the splitting of credits mandatory is one that we support. We are glad that the Hon. Member for York-Scarborough (Mr. McCrossan) has introduced this measure and we support it.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to confirm that following representations by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and extensive discussions between myself, the Hon. Member for York-Scarborough (Mr. McCrossan) and the Hon. Member for Sudbury (Mr. Frith), the amendments put forward today reflect what the Hon. Member for Sudbury had in fact moved in other motions. I had intended to do so myself as well, but because of the language contained in the Hon. Member for York-Scarborough's amendments we did not see any need. His amendments do exactly what we all intended to do.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for York-Scarborough (Mr. McCrossan). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion No. 1 agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 3 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for York-Scarborough (Mr. McCrossan). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion No. 3 agreed to.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-116, be amended in Clause 24 by striking out line 7 at page 32 and substituting the following therefor:

"payable for a month".

He said: Mr. Speaker, as Members know, there is a disability provision in the present Canada Pension Plan. In the drafting of the changes there was a question, although we thought the point was covered, as to whether those people currently receiving disability pensions would be beneficiaries of the higher amount which the amendments incorporate. As the wording in Motion No. 2 clearly spells out, those now receiving disability will get the greater amount should the Bill be passed.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take too much time because the points I wanted to make on behalf of my Party were made on second reading debate and in committee. However, I do want to say one or two things which are of primary concern to myself and my Party.

We would like to have some assurances from the Minister that the increase in benefits to persons considered disabled are not going to be syphoned off by insurance companies because of the bridging benefit which exists in many private plans on disability benefits. This has happened very often in the past and I think it would be extremely unfortunate if that were to continue. There is little sense in us increasing benefits for persons who are disabled simply to see an insurance company take that money. It would not be of any benefit to the disabled person.

• (1200)

The other concern I have is about the review committee that is being set up under this Bill. I am a bit fearful that this new review committee will adopt a very clinical attitude toward a person who is disabled rather than taking a look at the disability itself and the individual's personal circumstance.

There are some other areas in the Bill which I think could have gone further, but the Minister has assured us in committee that the discussions that took place previously between the federal and provincial Governments are to continue, and that we will probably see further amendments to the Canada Pension Plan within the next year or so. On that basis I would welcome the opportunity to have some further input into those discussions prior to these negotiations beginning to ensure that the concerns we have will receive proper attention in these discussions.

On that basis our Party, speaking for myself and on behalf of the Party, support the amendments in so far as they go in this particular Bill. We do recognize that there will be a significant improvement in benefits, particularly for disabled Canadians, and any improvements in these benefits are welcomed by us.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to delay the Bill, but I would like to register a very serious reservation with respect to the potential impact of this Bill on the well being of women. I do not think that the lot of widowed women in our society is improved to the degree that we had hoped. I am pleased the Minister is going to review this issue very carefully, along with the five-year review, the committee, the disability pension and the way it relates to old age security moneys, et cetera. There are many issues in there with which I hope you are able to come to a better accord with the provinces to enable our older people in our society, over time, to live more conveniently and with less poverty at their door.

Mr. Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 2 standing in the name of Mr. Epp (Provencher). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?