

Private Members' Business

disability portions of that plan and the provisions that many people who have paid their money into it are being denied simply because of poor information and poor legislation.

The Canada Pension Plan needs to be revised and this is the first step. The hon. member has identified one area but we must as parliamentarians look at the whole Canada Pension Plan and look to the future so that people are covered and not denied the benefits that should be made available to them.

I congratulate the hon. member for Don Valley East on a job well done.

Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might first have the consent of the House to share this time slot with the member for Calgary South.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is there unanimous consent to give the floor to the next speaker for the government side?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in favour of the intent of this motion and in favour of any measures which can be taken to improve the plight of those disabled Canadians who having contributed into the Canada Pension Plan through their employment subsequently became disabled, had to leave their employment as a result of the disability and are presently excluded from receiving any benefits simply because they did not apply in time for the pension. Anything that can be done to ameliorate the situation is to be commended.

I believe it is grossly unfair that through the passage of time people who would otherwise have qualified for a disability pension having contributed to the fund are denied. I think this point was made in debate on Bill C-39 and has been made on numerous occasions over the last number of years in this House by myself and others. I believe it is a situation that cries out for redress.

Last night in committee proceedings there was an indication of support from all sides of the House for this process. It may well require federal-provincial agreement. I believe the intent of this motion will result, if members agree, in the passage of the bill. It can go on to

the Senate and ultimately then will be on the table and will require the agreement of participating provinces.

What it does is put the subject matter on the federal-provincial table, something that has been promised in this place and to date has not happened. Therefore I want to place myself firmly on record as being in favour of this motion.

I would like to turn over the balance of this time period to my hon. colleague for Calgary Southwest.

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Calgary Southwest): Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-280 as has been put forth by the hon. member for Don Valley East. The main thrust is that the CPP disability benefit would be payable to disabled persons who had contributed to at least one-third of their contributory years, with a minimum of five years of contribution.

There are two or three things I would like to draw to the attention of the House prior to taking the vote. One thing is that a major change such as this one, because it is going to be a monetary cost to the fund, is going to require two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population agreeing. If this passes and the provinces do not agree with this, it means the end of the bill.

Also, if this goes through and we get two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population, perhaps the earliest it could come in would be January 1, 1994. That is roughly two years and a month from today.

The minister has spoken with the hon. member for Don Valley East and has certainly heard his concerns and understands exactly what he wishes with regard to the disabled. He also has given my colleague his word that he would review this situation in the spring of 1992 with regard to amending CPP. I hope the hon. member is listening. If this is done, we would be able to improve the benefits to the CPP people who had missed applying for the disability because they were either not knowledgeable or did not realize the situation. We would certainly get the bill amended much faster.

We have a choice of two ways of looking at this. If Bill C-280 is approved, it could not possibly be implemented before January 1, 1994 or it could be absolutely not agreed upon by the provinces.