

emphasize the measures likely to benefit children and disabled contributors. One amendment will ensure that the benefits of a disabled contributor to the Canada Pension Plan will be converted into orphan's benefit under the Canada Pension Plan without the need to submit an application to that effect.

Another amendment will ensure that child benefits under the Canada Pension Plan will be payable to a child who comes under the custody of a contributor to the Canada Pension Plan after that contributor becomes disabled.

A third change which is relatively important will ensure that eligibility for contributor's benefits will be protected for those who, because of some incapacity, cannot submit their application on time.

I would also like to go back very briefly to some comments made by groups that appeared before the House of Commons committee. I mention these comments because Senator Marsden made reference to them. I believe that she was not here last Thursday during my speech on second reading and she may have unintentionally suggested that we basically disregarded all the recommendations made by groups who appeared before the House of Commons committee.

I indicated last Thursday that these three particular concerns had been raised by five different groups and that the Minister of National Health and Welfare had undertaken to initiate discussions with all his provincial counterparts early in the new year. These representations dealt with eligibility for disability benefits when a contributor waits too long to apply. As I indicated earlier, the bill includes a provision that deals partly with this issue.

The representatives of those groups proposed that eligibility for the benefits of Canada Pension Plan contributors will be protected in all cases for those who are unable to submit their application within the prescribed period. I believe the minister is willing to consider the problem.

A second concern, which was raised a number of times, on the Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology and in presentations to the House of Commons Committee, was related to the definition of "disability" under the Canada Pension Plan.

As you know, any change in this definition has would bring about a shift in the population targeted by the present provisions, thus fundamentally changing in the current role of the Canada Pension Plan as part of the system of benefits for disabled persons.

A third concern was expressed in the form of a suggestion made in the course of this debate, to provide some protection under the Canada Pension Plan for persons who care for disabled children. The Canada Pension Plan provides that years with low or zero earnings, dedicated to raising children below the age of seven, may be subtracted from the contribution period. Some members of the House of Commons asked, and rightly so, that the provision be expanded to include periods spent caring for disabled children.

I repeat, these are interesting proposals and they will be considered by the minister early next year.

A final concern shared by members of the Senate Committee on Social Affairs Science and Technology was the issue of credit splitting due to divorce.

Senator David has already mentioned one of the committee's conclusions in this respect, a conclusion with which we agree.

My only objection would be that we are actually making a recommendation on the principle of the bill, but perhaps we should take a closer look at the credit splitting process, at who makes use of this process and what the general impact would be.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we must realize that the requested changes which would undoubtedly be desirable, would entail major amendments to the Canada Pension Plan and require the approval of two-thirds of the provinces representing two-thirds of the population.

So, before saying we want this or that, obviously these additional changes, which may be desirable in many ways, will have to be discussed later on with the provincial governments.

Again, I want to thank all those who contributed . . .

• (1510)

[English]

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): Order. It is "honourable senators", not "Mr. Speaker".

Senator Lavoie-Roux: May I say two words?

Senator Frith: Yes, but you should address your colleagues as "honourable senators", not "Mr. Speaker", in the Senate.

Senator Lavoie-Roux: It is an old habit. I have not been here long enough to have completely abandoned it.

Senator Frith: And I have developed an equally old habit of correcting people who are afflicted with it.

Senator Lavoie-Roux: Apparently I have behaved poorly. I apologize. I did not want to insult any of my colleagues.

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton: Apology refused.

Senator Frith: Is this a new amendment to the rules?

Senator Lavoie-Roux: In any event, I was about to finish by expressing my thanks to everyone who has given me their collaboration in the discussion and acceptance of Bill C-39 which, among other things, will be beneficial to 170,000 children who are among the poorest in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: It is moved by the honourable Senator Lavoie-Roux, seconded by the Honourable Senator Grimard, that the bill be read the third time now.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Paul David: Honourable senators, I move:

THAT the message to be sent to the House of Commons to inform them that the Senate did adopt Bill C-39—