

*Private Members' Business*

sion, not to mention the fact that he received no disability pension either.

After his death a year later in 1988, his widow, Mrs. Stoyanoff was denied survivor benefits even though Mr. Stoyanoff had made contributions in seven consecutive years during his contributory period.

Finally there is somewhat of a happy ending in that Mrs. Stoyanoff, after appealing several times in 1991, was granted a survivor's pension and a death benefit.

• (1710)

That was by sheer luck and does not correct the problem which this bill aims to address. That is only one of many, many problems that have come to my attention and I suspect as we look around the Chamber, almost everyone has had problems of this particular kind.

I have had a number of cases, including the case of Max Crittendon, who was a reporter and writer for the *Toronto Star*, the *Toronto Telegram*, the *Toronto Sun*, who developed multiple sclerosis and he too was barred from receiving a disability pension under the Canada Pension Plan because of a late application. He did not want to admit to himself that he was actually disabled.

Albert Culver had the same problem; Kalyopi Hilepo, the same problem; Lucille Recupero, the same problem; Mrs. Isabella Ross, the same problem; Catherine Belanger, the same problem; Sam Allen, the same problem. Those are just a few of the cases I have come across in my own constituency over the last few years. As I say, I am sure that around this Chamber, almost everyone—perhaps with the exception of the members of Parliament from Quebec, where the Quebec Pension Plan has similar provisions already—has had these kinds of problems.

Since my election to Parliament in 1984 I have pursued all of these cases with the department. The minister was involved and I have always received a very sympathetic hearing. The bureaucrats say they would love to give this person their disability pension, but their hands are tied. They told me there was this legislation there in black and white. They could not do anything, and please get it changed.

In 1985 I went to the then Minister of National Health and Welfare, the present Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and we discussed this matter in great detail.

He agreed that this was an injustice and that it should be changed. He said the government would make sure it was changed in the next round. You may recall that there was a bill to amend the Canada Pension Plan in 1985 that was to take effect on January 1, 1986, but that was already in the works, much as Bill C-39 is now, so the minister said it could not make any changes at that time. He said it would have to make them in the next round. However, the next round he said was going to be the next year and that they would make those changes in 1986, effective 1987.

I worked with his legislative assistant, Michael Hatfield, at the time and Michael Hatfield in fact drafted the very wording that is in the bill that is before the House tonight. It was his wording and his suggestion as to how to amend this bill, the then legislative assistant to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the present energy minister.

As you know there was no next round before the 1988 election. In January 1989 we had a new Minister of National Health and Welfare, and lo and behold when I started to make inquiries of the department and the minister, they could find no record whatsoever of my discussions, my correspondence, of Michael Hatfield's letter to me, nothing at all, although I have it here and I can table it if you wish. However, the department has no record whatsoever of that correspondence or of those discussions.

They said, of course, that in the next round they would look after these things. Well, here we are with another new minister and we have another new round, Bill C-39. It is still not in that new round and it is still not in that new bill. We still have not solved the problem.

When I first tabled the bill that is before the House tonight, Bill C-280, and it received first reading, I was contacted by the office of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Someone said I was right, this was a terrible situation, it should be changed and maybe they would include it in the next round.

The next round was supposed to be in 1986. We are now at 1991. That is something like five years later and we are having the next round now. Lord knows how many years it is going to be down the line for the next round again, how many ministers will have been changed in the meantime, and how many departmental and