

*The Address—Mr. Hansell*

with some tension for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) to make his statement, I think we have had a good and full day, and with that statement I would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion negatived.

**Mr. Hansell:** I wish to thank the house for its courtesy in permitting me to continue the debate. I am amazed, Mr. Speaker, that this house should have rejected the amendment which was made to the main motion.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I should like to call the hon. member's attention to the fact that it is not proper to reflect on the proceedings of the house. The amendment was put to the house.

**Mr. Hansell:** I was not going to debate the subject matter of the motion itself; I was going to analyse the political repercussions that might take place as a result of it.

I believe we all agree, however, that we are rather sorry the speech from the throne was not more definite with respect to the progress that might have been made in the matter of the social services in this country. We had been led to believe, when the Liberal party were bidding for power, that if they were returned to office we could expect great strides to be made in the field of social services. We regret that we do not find in the speech from the throne anything definite about legislation of that kind being brought down.

We are reminded that for the past few years, for instance, an unfortunate class of people in Canada known as incurables have been pressing, as much as they in their small way are able to press, for some consideration of their plight. Here are people who are, perhaps, crippled for life. They have no means of earning a livelihood. Perhaps they are what are known as shut-ins, bedridden cases. These people are thrown upon the mercy of municipalities to be included on the relief rolls or they are thrown upon the mercy of their own relatives and friends who may have enough interest in them to assist them.

Here is a class of people whose plea for some security should be heard by any responsible government. I say this because I had something to do with an organization known as the Canadian Association of Incurables. They are not asking much. They are not asking the government to revolutionize any system or turn everything upside down. Even if the government did that for them, it would be permissible. All they are asking is that they be placed in a position where they will not be dependent upon relatives or upon relief from the municipalities. Now, that is a reasonable request.

[Mr. Hansell.]

I wish to say this, and I am only reminding the appropriate minister of what I intimated to him during the last session, that these unfortunate people have no way of earning a livelihood. I prophesy that any legislation which the government may eventually bring down respecting social services will be of a contributory nature. Personally, I would be opposed to that, particularly as it might apply to old age pensions or to social services for these incurables, because the incurable has nothing to contribute to any insurance scheme. Any assistance rendered to them must be in the form of an outright gift. I do not agree with some who speak of the psychological repulsiveness of receiving anything from the state. I am not one of those who believe that it is something to be shunned. So far as incurables and old age pensioners are concerned, I believe that anyone who devotes his life to the welfare of Canada until he reaches the age of sixty-five or seventy is entitled to a pension by right of citizenship and not by virtue of any contribution he may be able to make to any scheme. That applies to men and women alike.

Furthermore, might I suggest that during his lifetime that person has not only put his life into the general welfare of Canada; throughout his life he has contributed under the scheme of taxation which this government, especially, deems it wise to impose upon our citizens. Considering all these things, I say that our aged citizens have a right to some reward for good citizenship. If not, then we are living in Canada under a system of dog eat dog, get all you can and let the other fellow go by the board. This does not contribute to a healthy, loyal Canadian citizenship. I say that our aged people have a right to expect a pension. And when I say "pension" I use the term in the sense of a pension and not in the sense of a return on an insurance scheme. The return from an insurance scheme is to my mind not a pension at all; it is simply getting back something that you put into it. That might be all right. On the side you can do that. Many insurance companies offer pension schemes. Any citizen can take advantage of one of them if he so desires. But, in addition to those schemes that are managed by insurance companies, why cannot our aged citizens or any of our citizens look forward to a time when they may retire with honour on a real pension given to them as a right of their citizenship? That is what I plead for.

Referring now once again to the incurables I certainly believe they have a right to an honourable existence; and an honourable existence means not a handout in the form