

government measure. My hon. friends will agree that a man has a right occasionally to differ from his party.

Mr. J. E. LETELLIER (Compton) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, it affords me much pleasure to have the opportunity of expressing my views on this resolution No. 15, which the House at present has under consideration. How is it possible to imagine that the government can grant every request of the country—among others tax reduction—and at the same time establish pensions for old age, the blind, workmen and destitute people over the whole country? I consider it absurd. Personally, and in principle, I would be willing to support such a measure, however, I realize that, at present, it is not practical to request the government, after considerably reducing taxation, to establish pension funds to meet, again I repeat—all demands of the country and factions being organized throughout Canada.

I lately received on behalf of the Montreal Blind Association, a request to kindly prevail on the Prime Minister to create pensions for the blind. In principle, I consider that it would be an essential necessity for this class of people who have practically no other means of earning a living and who are often placed in institutions, without even having the hope of relying on the support of some relative, because a great number of them have none.

I was glad to hear, a short while ago, my hon. colleague for North Battleford (Mr. McIntosh) move that these important measures be referred to the inter-provincial conference; and I add that we must not forget that our municipal authorities throughout the country have this duty and very ably look after the poor within their limits. Moreover, we have benevolent societies in most of our municipalities, and further, section 92, paragraph 7, of the British North America Act gives the right to organize charitable institutions. We, therefore, have sufficient protection in this regard not only in the parishes of our province but throughout all the provinces of the Dominion. Consequently I am confident that the present government will enact all the measures necessary to meet the needs of all. Resolution No. 15, which appears on the orders of the day, moved by the hon. member for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps), is certainly worthy of serious consideration on the part of the government, however, I add that in my humble opinion, the government is not, at present, in a position to acquiesce to these appeals. So long as the people of this

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country insist that the hon. Minister of Finance should endeavour by every possible means to decrease our debt, and at the same time reduce taxation, it would be imposing an enormous task on his shoulders to have him also find resources so as to establish pension funds of this nature in the course of the present session. I say the time is not opportune. Perhaps next session; as a possibility, but not as a certainty, I hope, together with the hon. members not only on the government side but also those included in all parties of this House, that in the near future, if not next session, at least the third session of this parliament, the hon. Minister of Finance will succeed—with the ability that distinguishes him and the support of his eminent colleagues—in finding ways and means to enact legislation which will bring happiness to our workmen as well as to the destitute people in this country.

Mr. W. J. WARD (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this debate until a few moments ago. I think we owe a good deal to the hon. member for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps) for having brought this very important matter before the House. I think it is no less important than even the Georgian bay canal. I was rather disappointed with my good friend from Weyburn (Mr. Young): "Consistency, thou art a jewel." I cannot see the difference between sending a measure of this kind to committee and sending a measure such as the Georgian bay canal charter. Personally I am prepared to support the sending of the Georgian bay canal charter to committee; I do so on principle, and I want to see this motion go to committee on exactly the same basis.

I rose more particularly to support the suggestion of the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Ross). I have on file I think some fifteen or twenty applications from returned soldiers covering a period of some four or five years; these men have become disabled no doubt through war service but can get no consideration whatever under the present act governing pensions to soldiers. I do think either amendment to that act or new legislation is long overdue; these soldiers who now find themselves disabled due to war service should be looked after.

I think this very important piece of legislation now before us should go to the committee on industrial and international relations, and I also think it would be most unfortunate to throw a measure of this kind, with no previous consideration, into the inter-provincial conference which may take place some time in the near future, because there