

The reason why I favour the mothers is that any woman who has gone through fifty-five years of her life and has brought up a family deserves a compensation from the country; she deserves to share in the heritage which we all should have, a part of which we all should enjoy. Unless our mothers are taken care of, there will be a repetition of the condition which was depicted in this house last night, when it was pointed out that in the four years 1932-35, 33,000 mothers died in childbirth and 70,000 children died under one year of age. During the last war Canada lost 60,000 men in four years, but during the four-year period 1932-35 103,000 infants and mothers perished. That is a fact we should consider and take to heart.

Let me read an extract from a letter which appeared in the *Edmonton Bulletin* of January 12, 1942. It is written by an elderly man expressing his sentiments on this subject:

I am sixty-two and not able to get a job owing to my general health and age. I am within eight years of the age now, but by the time I am seventy years old I won't need the pension. I often wonder where my next meal will come from and to go and ask for relief is like signing a death sentence to get anything.

He goes on:

How many are there that live to be seventy that ever enjoy his or her old age pension? . . . So if we get the age pension at sixty we may enjoy a little of it.

I came here in 1900 and before Edmonton was very much of a town I helped build up the country and now it is hard to get a living out of it.

That man is only sixty-two, but he feels that by the time he would be entitled to the old age pension he will not be here. Of course that is the prospect of most of the older people. Imagine, they have to wait until they are seventy before they get what is coming to them! Our old age pension regulations are not a gesture of kindness; they are a gesture of inhumanity. Why could we not include the people who are physically incapacitated?

Right in this city of Ottawa, when I got off the train on one occasion, I saw an old man playing a violin near the Chateau Laurier hotel when the temperature was about ten degrees below zero. Surely that poor old man could not have produced a melody had he been paid a thousand dollars for it, because he was too old, and his hands were cold. He had an old cap that someone had thrown away and that he had probably picked up out of a garbage can. The poor man had to play the violin so that someone would throw him a penny. I appeal to every hon. member this afternoon to see to it that we take these people off the streets and

give them a pension. Let them be medically examined, and if they are found to be totally incapacitated they should be given a pension whether they are thirty, forty or fifty years of age. In almost every Canadian city we find men who are minus both legs sitting on a cement pavement with the temperature at forty degrees below zero and trying to beg for their living. I suggest that these men who are given certificates to be allowed to beg should be taken off the streets and given proper care and food and clothing, and at least some of them might be able to do a little for this country. I want to emphasize that particular problem. I feel ashamed when I see these men minus their legs sitting on a cement sidewalk in front of a building when the temperature is forty degrees below zero. That sort of thing should not exist in Canada. This man should not be playing the violin in order to beg, when the temperature is below zero. Let us not be a nation of beggars, let us try to solve some of these problems. It reminds me of an incident when one poor man who had lost both legs was sitting in front of a big department store in Edmonton holding out two hats. A chap going by said, "What's the idea, holding out two hats instead of one?" Well, the poor fellow was miserable, he thought he might collect more by stretching out both hands. He said, "Well, business is so good. I am branching out!"

Let us tackle these problems properly and solve them. There is no excuse for not looking after our aged people, the pioneers of this country. I know scores of people in western Canada who went there and cleared the land of stones, cultivated it and made it almost a garden, and what have they to-day? The mortgage companies came in and foreclosed and those people were thrown out. If they apply for old age pensions, some clerks who do not even understand what life is all about will order these old pioneers away, these men who should be treated with courtesy, to whom we should extend a helping hand and say, This is your share of our heritage, something which you deserve. But they are cut off the old age pension if it is found that they have a dollar or have someone to whom they can go and perhaps sleep in the basement.

While I am on this subject let me make a plea to the committee to be set up, also to the government and particularly to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King). There is one thing that has been overlooked for many years. I believe there are not many hon. members who see it in the light that I see it. We have in western Canada many of these pioneers who settled in blocks. This is not