

our protective force in Canada, should be considerably increased for the men at the lower end of the scale.

There is another matter which concerns the personal comfort of the members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when on duty. I refer to those men who are on show in front of our buildings, who add dignity and, shall I say, some interest to the tourist trade. I think that is a fair description of their role out there. They stand in front of these buildings in the sweltering heat, clad in full regalia, with high boots. These men are splendidly equipped, but it seems to me that they are not comfortably dressed for their job. I suggest that the minister should take up with Commissioner Wood the matter of issuing to those men some form of sensible summer garb to be worn during the time when they are employed in positions where they cannot get under a tree and enjoy a cool breeze for a few moments, and also change regulations to permit them to remove their tunics.

There is another matter which looks like discrimination against non-commissioned officers in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and to which I would direct the minister's attention. It may be that he will make a statement on the point, because I notice that in his annual report Commissioner Wood has drawn attention to it. Commissioned officers in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are in receipt of pension rights for their wives to which the commissioned officers contribute nothing. That grant to the widows, by virtue of the fact that the commissioned personnel do not pay into the fund, is not on an actuarial basis. The widows are entitled to one-half of the pension allowance of the husband before his decease.

What is the position in respect of the non-commissioned officers and men? The men receive pensions, without contributions having been made. But to assure the payment of pensions to their wives, in the event of marriage, since 1934 it has been compulsory for non-commissioned officers and constables to pay into a fund which is kept actuarially sound. This is where the discrimination arises, when we compare that fund with pensions payable to judges' wives, and the like. Those non-commissioned officers and constables must pay into the widows' pension fund five per cent of their salaries. On their decease an actuarial calculation is made, and a petty pension is granted to their widows.

This savours of class distinction which is not in the best interests of the members of the force. To my personal knowledge their esprit de corps has always been excellent. I believe that in general they command the respect of

all Canadians, because of the manner in which they conduct their police duties. I regret that instances have arisen carrying the suggestion that there has been a policy under which they should spy on individuals across Canada. I assume that they do carry on a form of investigation, and I should hope that that practice would not be continued.

Would the minister give us some assurance respecting the marriage privileges of single constables? Will he, too, give some suggestion as to what relief may be expected in connection with the widows' fund for non-commissioned officers and men, and respecting a general increase in pay for those at the lower end of the scale? Then, too, he might discuss some remedy for the condition of the men who stand out here on parade each day in their regular garb.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The Royal Canadian Mounted Police require no commendation, because all of us realize that their achievements and the heritage that is theirs are unequalled anywhere in the world. My experience with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police extends over many years. I can remember some of the old-timers who served with the original force.

With much of what my hon. friend has said I am in agreement, but I must say that after an extensive practice in the courts, running over a period of twenty-five years, I have yet to see a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who has been engaged in anything bordering on spying. Their actions and activities, in all my experience, have always been consonant with the highest traditions of the force to which they belong. While there have been suggestions to the contrary—and suggestions are easily made when proof is not required—I say the mounted police, as a whole, have performed a work which needs no commendation either in the house or out of it, a work that has resulted in the building up of our western country, and making it a law-abiding land, unequalled anywhere.

I join with the hon. member in his reference to the marriage provision, a matter which has been discussed before. I am familiar with the reasons given by the commissioner and the minister for not allowing constables to marry at an earlier age. But I believe to-day that, when it is so necessary to have efficient men in the mounted police, nothing should be permitted to exist which in any way would cause deterioration in the force.

In addition to what the hon. member has said, I would refer to the difficulty experienced by young constables with nine or ten years experience receiving promotion. To-day those promotions are too slow. Many able