

will do well. The people of Canada will approve its action. I, therefore, hope that the motion before the house will receive favourable consideration by the government.

• (5:50 p.m.)

Let us not make this day's debate another exercise in futility. Much in this motion is very worth while. I trust that the government will not consider that what has been said has been said as a matter of course, just because the New Democratic Party has been assigned an opposition day. I hope the government will listen to what the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre had to say and to what others following him said. I know he is sincere in presenting his motion before the house. He has presented it in the hope that other hon. members will join him in convincing the government that something should be done to correct the injustices from which our pensioners and old people in this country suffer. I, therefore, implore government backbenchers to try to persuade those sitting on the treasury benches, who control our purse strings, to do something to correct the injustice being perpetrated against our senior citizens, war veterans, retired civil servants and other pensioners. It is very difficult for these people to live at the standard to which they are entitled. All Canadians are entitled to live at a high standard. Surely, a country as rich as Canada, with an abundance of natural resources can give its pensioners and old people a better break than they are now receiving. I earnestly recommend this motion to the government and hope that steps will be taken without further delay to correct the inequitable situation facing our pensioners and old people.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, may I congratulate the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for bringing before the house this important issue affecting most people in Canada. For many years he has been the champion of our older people and has fought for increased pensions. Although I am young, I am concerned about many inequities I have seen across the country. Injustices have been perpetrated against our people regardless of race, religion or age.

It seems clear, if we examine our society, that as a group, older people have been discriminated against more than any other sector. Although we may talk about equality of opportunity for all, the dignity of life and the contributions of all people to our society, I feel terrible when I see what is happening to our older people. Not only are

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our older people discriminated against economically, but some suffer loss of social dignity and loss of pride. That is disgraceful. I could cite many examples where senior citizens in the constituency of Yorkton-Melville are barely keeping alive on \$100 a month. They live in houses not fit for human habitation and try to pay medical and drug bills. Yet, these are the people who built Canada. I do not say we should pay them a whole series of extra benefits and extra rewards; I am merely saying that they should be treated as all the rest of us are treated. They should get the opportunities the rest of us receive in Canada. Many of our older people are not getting that kind of deal and, as Members of Parliament, it is up to us to make sure that our older people live on a decent standard.

In my riding of Yorkton-Melville, for example, a number of railway employees are talking about the raw deal the C.N.R. has given them in connection with pensions. Statistics show that nearly 400 retired C.N.R. employees are receiving pensions of less than \$25 a month; 2,250 other employees are receiving pensions of \$25 a month and over 8,000 C.N.R. employees are receiving pensions of less than \$80 a month.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The time being six o'clock, this sitting stands adjourned, until eight o'clock.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

MISCELLANEOUS ESTIMATES

Mr. Fernand-E. Leblanc (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, would the house allow me to revert to motions, in order to present the fifth report of the standing committee on miscellaneous estimates?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Does the house agree to revert to motions?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the fifth report of the standing committee on miscellaneous estimates both in French and English.

[*Editor's Note: Text of foregoing report appears in today's Votes and Proceedings.*]