

boys to the army than any other rural county in Canada so that I feel I have a right to speak. I look after the boys who are in the army.

There is to be a change in the name. If there are to be no more pensions granted then I do not see why this department should be called the department of pensions any longer. It is impossible to get any satisfaction from the department. Many times in the House of Commons I have denounced the manner in which veterans are dealt with by the department of pensions. But always the same answer is given, that I am unfair to the poor and honest civil servants who are doing so much for their country.

We should get rid of the department of pensions. The salaries that are paid to these useless nonentities who are no good at all should be given to the men who have been in the service, to the men who have been wounded in the service. I have taken up many cases and I have always received charming letters from the minister, but they do not mean anything. If he would spend on his own department the time that he wastes on the future happiness in the three Thursdays week, it would be much better. We must go to the root of the problem and fire the nonentities that are in all departments. I know that if I said that to a crowd of veterans I would be cheered to the echo because there is not a veteran who is satisfied with the treatment he has received from those men.

We hear it said: Oh, but there are veterans from the first war or from this war who are on the board. That is all right. I know that those men deserve consideration, but it does not follow that because a man has served his country well during the first war or during the present, he is a universal genius. We know that the civil service preference is used sometimes to give to veterans, simply because they are returned men, positions for which they are not qualified. I agree that the state should do everything for the returned men, but I say that we should put them in positions where they can render the greatest service to the state. Not only that, but it is not by putting a veteran in a position for which he is not qualified that the country is rendering service to the veterans. I know it is a most difficult problem but there should be a system of selection by which a man who is discharged from the army after serving overseas will be put in a position where he can render the best possible service to the community.

[Mr. Pouliot.]

The resolution deals with a lot of other matters. It provides for a department of veterans' affairs—

... to assume the management and control of and to consolidate in such department all matters not by law assigned to any other department relating to the care, treatment, training or reestablishment of members and former members of the armed forces and other persons—

Who are the other persons who will receive military pensions if they have not served in the previous war or in this war? It goes on:—and all such other matters as may from time to time be assigned.

Then it goes on to provide for the creation of a new department—with the old timber.

We have tried to find out the meaning and the purpose of this resolution. We have already stated in the House of Commons that those who have a right of priority over all other immigrants, all refugees, and all war guests in this country are precisely the veterans of the Canadian army. We moreover have the profound conviction that the first reforms to be made should be to improve the functioning of the Department of Pensions and National Health, and that they should start with the army itself. We have amply shown to the house that military doctors have often put in category "A" draftees who were physically unfit. I have put my files at the disposal of the Minister of National Defence in asking for the elimination of all incompetence in the army medical corps. A soldier who is not in good health is only a useless burden to the army and to the taxpayers.

According to paragraph 2 of section 11 of the Pensions Act, soldiers who have been in service in Canada are entitled to a pension—
... when the injury or disease or aggravation thereof resulting in disability or death in respect of which the application for pension is made arose out of or was directly connected with such military service.

When a soldier is put in category "A" or "B" by the medical examiner and taken into the army and is afterwards put in a lower category or discharged, is there not a presumption that that soldier is entitled to a pension in virtue of the law? If he was in good health before his enlistment or training and then afterwards he was declared physically unfit upon discharge, is it not to be presumed that he contracted that disability during his military service? That is the reason why it is so difficult for military doctors to admit their errors of diagnosis in their speedy examinations. Certain officers show a zeal that is untimely and uncalled for in suggesting to soldiers who are physically unfit that they sign their application for discharge and resign