

*The Address—Mr. Fairey*

true measure of either his appearance or his vigour. If anybody likes to tell me that I look to be 77, I will argue it out with him.

Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that there are some amongst the recipients of war veterans allowance whose experiences were such as to take a heavy toll of their strength. I am thinking particularly of the man of the first war who experienced long periods of extreme fatigue during the trench warfare days, followed by exhausting battle experiences in the prolonged and grim struggles toward the end of that war. Also I am thinking of the prisoners of war who, after those experiences I have just described, had the added agonies of being treated inhumanely in prisoner of war camps. That point need not be elaborated. I can agree, and even assert, that such men have suffered to the extent that their ability to become rehabilitated in civilian life has been impaired and that they suffer disability despite the fact that their medical history sheets do not show it.

I wonder if I may speak to the veterans in this house. How many of us remember having a medical examination immediately prior to discharge? I do not. Yet I must have had one because I was discharged as A-1. I suspect, though, that the boys of the second war were wiser or perhaps better advised, because I rather fancy they see to it that they get everything on their medical history sheets.

As a means of settling this disturbing question of war veterans allowance, my suggestion to the minister is this. Surely the experience of his medical advisers, of himself and of the fine men who administer the affairs of the veterans affairs department is such that, in the light of their present knowledge, they can devise some formula or criterion to be applied to the recipients of war veterans allowance in order to determine whether in fact their experiences during the war were such as to impair their physical or mental capacities. If that can be shown, perhaps by examination of their battle records, then I say that these men should be granted the disability pension. Such injuries are real and can be as devastating, I am quite sure, as an actual gunshot wound. Their names could be removed from these long lists of recipients of war veterans allowance. Surely nowadays we know that all hurts are not measured in medical terms.

I have such great confidence in the ability of the officials of the Department of Veterans Affairs that I feel sure they could come up with some formula or plan such as I suggest and eliminate these people who have a just claim for injury although it is not shown on the medical history sheets. This would leave all those who should be assisted as recipients

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of straightforward assistance without any implication of reward for service or pension or anything else. I know it is a difficult job, but I do not think it is beyond the ability of the officials.

To conclude this harangue on war veterans allowance may I say this. In my view, to increase payments as is now proposed is good and desirable, but it is not the complete answer because, as somebody has said, once you grant assistance you create a pressure group, and so long as the group about which I have been speaking is included, there will continue to be further pressure. If I may coin a phrase, it would be to say this: Sufficient is not always enough.

This being the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, Mr. Speaker, it is traditional that one should say something about his own province and his own constituency. In my case these are British Columbia and the capital city, Victoria. When I first spoke in this house, on the address in reply to the speech from the throne in the first session, I stressed the importance of transportation and stated that transportation facilities are essential to the development of my province and, indeed, of all provinces.

Here I am going to parallel something that was said by the leader of the C.C.F. party because in the press I notice that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Winters) has urged the provinces to "get on with it" in connection with the building of the trans-Canada highway. I am not facetious when I say that I hope the eyebrows of the Minister of Public Works will not rise too high when I suggest that if he expects the trans-Canada highway to be completed in a reasonable number of years, he had better do it himself; and if he ever gives it a thought, he might consider asking his colleagues to consent to his asking this house for funds to do it as a federal venture.

I am one of those who believe that before too many years, with the development of transportation and freight on the highways, we shall have to have some form of federal highway authority, charged with responsibility for the construction and maintenance of highways which can truly be said to be interprovincial, perhaps traversing or connecting two or three provinces. That may be a long way off. The seed I am casting may fall on stony ground, but seeds have been known to sprout in unlikely places.

It was my intention, Mr. Speaker, to confine my remarks on transportation to a serious situation which confronts my own constituency, the city of Victoria, Esquimalt and the surrounding area. I say this seriously