

water, swam to shore, and stayed with the Canadian prisoners for the duration of the war.

Hastings county, where I reside, is, like many other parts of Canada, becoming very conscious of its hidden mineral wealth. At Madoc there is the largest talc mine in the world. We have fluorspar and feldspar marble and marble chips, roofing granules, four producing uranium mines in the Bancroft area, and a huge iron ore development at Marmora, the Bethlehem mine, where over 20 million tons of limestone had to be removed to reach the ore body. The mine is now in production with enough ore in sight for open-pit mining for at least twenty-five years—a most valuable asset in time of war.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the Prime Minister of Canada, a great Canadian. Canada has indeed been most fortunate in the calibre of men who have filled this high office since Confederation. His sincerity and his most earnest desire to serve the people of Canada have endeared him to tens of thousands of Canadians.

I notice in the Speech from the Throne that it is indicated there will be increased assistance to our senior citizens. How fortunate we are that we live in a country with resources which enable us to make such financial assistance to our older citizens. Those of us who live in small villages or in the country are, perhaps, more conscious of the struggles and the hardships that the elderly people have to endure, in many cases through no fault of their own, perhaps through age and physical disabilities. They find that the old age security payments provide just the difference between poverty and some small share in the better things of life to which we all feel they are entitled. With the decrease in the value of our dollar, and the increased cost of living, I doubt if there will be objection from any part of Canada to the proposed increases in these pensions. The same applies to the pensions for the blind, payments to the group in the 65-70 year age group, and payments under the Disabled Persons Act. Any honourable senators who have had anything to do with that act will agree that the definition it contains, "totally and permanently disabled", is most rigid. To me it sounds like an almost impossible requirement. Many times I have heard in the other place requests from all parties to the Minister of National Health to modify this most restrictive definition.

As you are aware, the present scale under the War Veterans Allowance Act is \$60 for a single veteran and \$120 for a married veteran. This amount certainly is not excessive, especially when you consider that the applicant for the allowance is subject to the means

test. An increase in the allowance will be most welcome to the thousands of veterans who receive payments under the act. While there is no reference in the Speech from the Throne to any change in the ceiling on permissible income, I sincerely hope that the ceiling will be raised, for as the act stands at the present time, if the veteran earns income in addition to his allowance, which puts him over the ceiling, his allowance is reduced until the overpayment is recovered. I have always felt that this was wrong and that, on the contrary, the veteran should be encouraged in every way to work and supplement his income without any fear of having his allowance reduced.

Mention is made in the Speech from the Throne that the groups to whom allowances are paid will be enlarged. I presume this refers to the veterans who served in the United Kingdom in World War I, which under the act is not classed as a theatre of war. If this is what this reference means, I think it is a most worthy effort, because everyone knows that the soldier—and we are dealing entirely with private soldiers and N.C.O's under this act—is subject to army discipline and has no control over where he is sent. He goes wherever he is ordered, and in many cases veterans had to stay in the United Kingdom through no fault of their own. Now that most of the veterans of World War I are getting close to sixty or over sixty it seems to me that the veterans who served in the United Kingdom are entitled to come under the War Veterans Allowance Act. As the allowance is subject to the means test, the number of veterans who will qualify will not be very large and will decrease each year.

Mention is also made in the Speech from the Throne of certain sections of the Pension Act. It is to be hoped that some of the minor wrinkles will be ironed out of this act. We are indeed fortunate that we have at the head of our Pension Board two officials who are capable and are doing a fine job. The chairman of the board is a veteran with a distinguished war record, and he is most efficient and sympathetic. The vice-chairman, a former member of the House of Commons, tries in every case to do the very best possible for the veteran; but, after all, these officials can only proceed under the terms of the act. It has often occurred to me with respect to cases that have passed through my hands that the medical officers who examined the veterans might have adopted a more sympathetic attitude. In World War II the soldier was given a most complete and thorough medical examination on enlistment, including X-ray examination. In all cases where