

The Address—Mr. McLure

1945. It has been brought to the attention of the Minister of National Health and Welfare on many occasions. Different hon. members have brought in resolutions, but unfortunately those resolutions have never come to a vote. The last resolution on this matter was talked out by no less a person than the Minister of National Health and Welfare himself. A notice of motion to the same effect appears on the order paper this fall. When all other things are being considered so far as security is concerned, it is deplorable that the incapacitated and the crippled are pretty nearly ignored.

On several occasions I have written to the minister and to the department on special cases. All I could ever get back was a deaf and dumb reply. When social security is being considered, surely this class of people should have the opportunity of looking forward to some hope in life, and that they will be taken care of. I could cite many cases, but I shall not do so. I shall cite just one case, Mr. Speaker, that I have brought to the attention of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. This is a young man now 38 years of age. He had been in an accident on a farm when he was about five years old. He is very badly crippled and unable to walk. He had been ill after the accident and never was able to get any education. Consequently, we have a man 38 years of age, badly crippled and with no hope of anything in life. While his parents were alive they provided for him and took care of him. When they passed to the great beyond he became dependent on the youngest brother of the family, a young man married and bringing up a family of his own. He is just a labourer, who finds it difficult at all times to make a proper living for his own family. But I will say this for him. He is endeavouring to bring all the comforts he possibly can to his unfortunate and incapacitated brother. There are scores of such cases right in my own constituency. No one but the state itself should have to look after these people. I hope that before another session passes something will be done by way of pension, or in some other way, to take care of the incapacitated and the crippled that we have in our different constituencies.

I should like to say a few words with respect to pensions. I want to refer particularly to the retired pensioner, about whom a good deal has been said in this debate. Our province is particularly interested in this because we have a large number of men who have been retired from the railway and from offices of the civil service such as the post office, and others on retirement allowance. A large number of the railwaymen are

having difficulty with regard to their retirement allowances. Railwaymen have to retire at a certain age. Most of them retired under the old law, when their retirement allowance was very small. As I said, they retired at a certain age, according to the regulations of the department in which they were working. At that time they had what they considered was security sufficient to enable them to eke out at least a fair existence. But that was prior to the high cost of living. A large number of these men are today receiving retirement allowances of less than \$40 a month, and consequently they find it most difficult indeed even to get the bare necessities of life. It is true that some of them have reached the age of 70 and will now be able to get the old age pension, but there are still a lot of them under the age of 70, who will be in the position of having this small retirement allowance, and not enough to live on. These are railwaymen who have given of their very best in the service of this country for a long number of years. They were faithful employees. The railway pension fund claims that it can do nothing for these people. However, I find that the railway pension fund does not make the payment direct to these men. The payment comes from the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier). It is up to the government to see that something is done immediately for these men who were faithful to their position when they were in the employ of the railway. Numbers of these men have approached the government at different times. Since they have retired, the men accepting their positions have had at least two or three increases in pay to which they were entitled under present-day conditions. A man in the employ of the railway can always use the big stick to get what he wants, because he has the right to go on strike to make his demands secure. But a retired man has no opportunity of that kind; consequently, he has nothing else to think of now but the question, where can he go to get a little handout from charity to keep body and soul together?

Another class of retired people that I wish to bring to the attention of the government are civil servants who were clerks in the post office and those who were retired as mail couriers last year in my own city of Charlottetown. These men now have a small retirement allowance which would have permitted them to live had the cost of living not gone up so greatly. But the way things are today they find themselves unable to get along, especially the letter carriers and postal clerks who were paid a special bonus during the war. That bonus was cut off