

PENSIONS FOR THE BLIND

— *A National Necessity*

The Government of Canada,
Parliament Buildings,
Ottawa, Canada.

October 10, 1933.

MEMORIAL REFERENCE PENSIONS FOR THE BLIND

Gentlemen:

The underlying reasons which led to the provision of pensions for the blind in Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand are precisely the same as those obtaining in Canada. Apace with a growing strength of public opinion supporting a movement in this direction for Canada, representations have been continued seeking legislation.

During the past three years the problem itself has become accentuated by reason of individuals, families and agencies who have been contributing in support of dependent blind people, finding it increasingly difficult to meet the need because of conditions. On the other hand, the provision of general unemployment relief funds only deals with such cases from a destitution standpoint and does not recognize (a world accepted principle) that greater assistance is required to relieve the destitution of a blind person than of a sighted person. This is not a transient problem resulting from present economic conditions but is one of destitution arising from permanent unemployment because of blindness coupled with age and/or other infirmities.

Voluntary agencies in this and other countries have tried to meet the need of the permanently unemployable adult blind but do recognize that sufficient private funds cannot be secured. The only adequate solution is the provision of a state pension or allowance.

Blind persons and others interested in their behalf, recognizing the difficulties of Governments under present conditions, approach the whole subject with great concern and make these representations at this time only because of the urgent need which exists.

It is, therefore, respectfully urged that legislation be enacted at the earliest possible date, providing pensions for the blind. However, if it is considered necessary to have the whole subject thoroughly investigated by a special Parliamentary Committee, it is our earnest hope that such Committee will be appointed during the forthcoming session of Parliament to consider and recommend legislation.

May we assure you of a sincere desire to co-operate in very possible way.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of:

FORTY-TWO ORGANIZATIONS FOR AND
OF THE BLIND THROUGHOUT CANADA.