

recognize that those who are on the wrong side of forty-five years have problems just as perplexing and just as difficult of solution as those facing our youth.

It is an unquestioned fact that the age limit in industry to-day is somewhere around forty-five years. I think it can be definitely stated that the majority of people over forty-five years are in a state of unemployability. I believe the resolution introduced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Heaps) is one of the most important introduced in the house at this session. However, it looks very much to me as if it were going to be talked out. In all probability this discussion will not be completed. I should like to see this resolution go to a vote in order that we may find out the feelings of hon. members on this important matter. This is a matter of national importance and as such it should claim precedence over everything else.

I believe we should establish once and for all whether or not there exists among our old people or those who have passed the age of, shall we say, fifty years, a condition that requires immediate attention. Once we have definitely established that fact; once we have agreed that such a condition exists, then we should work together to find a solution. The present distressing conditions which prevail throughout Canada and which have such a deadly grip upon our people are traceable directly to our faulty economic system. In my judgment it is not only foolish but asinine to think that these people can solve their own problems by their own efforts. It is sad to think that these respectable old people who have reached the peak of their usefulness in life have nothing to look forward to except the poorhouse or the dole. It is not surprising that these people are dissatisfied with conditions as they now exist. They look to us who sit here in this parliament to find a remedy and to stay here until we do.

I must say that I cannot agree entirely with the latter portion of the resolution which states that the giving of this allowance or pension to the older generation would retire them from industrial activity, thereby creating opportunities for the younger generation to be usefully and gainfully employed. I believe that Canada would suffer an irreparable loss if we were to force men and women who have reached the age of forty-five, or fifty, or sixty, to give up their labours. The loss would be especially felt in such branches of work as jurisprudence, the sciences, art, music and pursuits of a like nature. The average age of men who do their best work is fifty years. The best work of the workers has been done by men around the age of forty-

seven years, whilst that of the thinkers is about fifty-two years. There is a tendency to-day towards the idea that men and women who have passed middle age should be eliminated from industry in order that the younger and more aggressive people may be given a clear chance in the rush to the front.

What are the objections to granting a pension to people over sixty years? Two major objections have been advanced. The first one is that it is entirely a provincial matter. I agree. But what happens when a provincial government endeavours to legislate in an attempt to bring economic security to its people? The legislation which that government considers essential and of vital importance towards attaining this economic security is promptly disallowed by a higher authority. We all know that this has been done in the case of Alberta.

The second objection is that it would mean added expense; that it would raise the taxes. May I say that from the standpoint of orthodox economics I entirely agree, and I further admit that we should guard against increasing the tax burden, against placing on the shoulders of future generations burdens which we find ourselves unable to bear. So I believe that at this stage of parliament we should first of all decide whether or not the need exists. I venture to say that if I were to question all hon. members of the house, they would tell me that the need does exist; but they would wind up their answers by saying, "Where will all the money come from?" I hope that before the end of this session this group will be able to show where it comes from at the present time. If the need exists we should put it up fairly and squarely to the Minister of Finance. He in turn should put to work those experts who are in his department and give them the problem. If those experts are not able to give him a solution; if they cannot tell him how it can be done without increasing taxation, I suggest to him that he fire them and get new ones. To-day the Minister of Finance can find subsidies for steamship companies; he can absorb the deficits of the Canadian National Railways; he can find millions for defence; he can provide at least a quarter of a million dollars for commissions to investigate the textile industry and wheat marketing; but he admits tacitly that this is a problem which is entirely beyond solution.

May I say that a pension to people over the age of sixty would be one of the best means I know of for distributing purchasing power. We would be able to get goods moving off the shelves on which they are resting at the present time, and that in turn