

The WITNESS: Yes. Mr. Butler represents the War Amputations of Canada.

Mr. BUTLER: Mr. Minister, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, I believe that Major Wickens has covered as well as I could hope to, or better, the first portion of the brief, namely the war veterans allowance.

I would like to say a few words on the hospitalization treatment for non-pensionable disabilities. First of all, I wish to explain that I feel, and I know the group with me feel likewise, that we are ultimately going to make every effort possible to get free treatment for all non-pensionable disabilities. However, I also realize, speaking practically, you very often are better to accept a portion of your resolution than you are to attempt to get the whole thing all in one bite.

In the present situation as far as hospitalization is concerned we are very grateful to Dr. Warner and his group and for the government in allowing us the percentage of non-pensionable free treatment we are now getting. Roughly it entails a means test of allowable income for six months before or after. Assuming a person is in hospital for a year it is averaged across that period. Then, his pension is also included and there are adjustments allowed for a wife and child. At a certain level he is permitted extra free hospitalization for non-pensionable disabilities. If his total income for that period is over that amount he pays the shot. I would like to explain what we feel a war disability pension is. The compensation is for pain and suffering incurred in the past. The present difficulty we are all having is with awkwardness of getting around, additional cost of transportation, and hiring help for jobs we are unable to do. This all adds up to the fact that under the present situation the high pensioner, the 100 per cent pensioner—75 and up—actually are being discriminated against under the present hospitalization situation. The compensation which we receive is recognized as far as income tax regulations are concerned—they are not taxable—and I feel it would be a tremendous step in the right direction if we could have our war disability compensation, or whatever you may call it, excluded from this means test. If I am on a 100 per cent pension I do not feel it is fair that I go into hospital and have a \$15 a month deduction from my particular pension and on top of that am unable to qualify for free hospitalization. I know that the government is now going into the matter as to what is and as to what is not actually attributable, but it is logical that a chap with both legs off is more apt to fall downstairs or slip on the ice than someone who has a leg off below the knee and there is no entitlement for that. I feel that the discrimination against the high pensioners is unfair and I feel it would be a step in the right direction if pension could be excluded when this means test is being taken.

I do not think I have anything further to say on that. I would be glad to answer any questions which I may be able to answer.

The CHAIRMAN: Since we are taking individuals now, perhaps we could have the questions. This is a definite point which Mr. Butler has raised.

Mr. CROLL: It is also raised in the brief.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, perhaps we had better hear from all the others first.

Mr. FRED WOODCOCK: (*Representative of the Sir Arthur Pearson Association of War Blinded*): Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few things about free hospitalization for classes 1 to 11, and also about the \$15 deduction from the 100 per cent pensioners only. I know that perhaps there is someone here who will differ with me in the statement, but the only person being charged for hospitalization for disability in Canada today is the 100 per cent pensioner; the rest have their pensions made up to the 100 per cent pensioner's amount less the \$15. I may put it perhaps a little more simply if I said, Mr. Chairman,