

had gone up to \$115 a month in 1958. Today, it is even higher and reaches \$150 a month, I think. I have no intention of blaming anyone for giving special consideration to veterans, war widows and their children. On the contrary, I believe such action deserves commendation. I even believe that, in many cases, the government could show even greater generosity to those who have sacrificed their lives, their freedom or their health in order to save their fellow-citizens during world wars or other conflicts. It is only in 1968, or 23 years after the last world war, that it was decided to make a thorough study of veterans problems and this culminated in the 1,300-page Woods report. We are still trying today to consider an increase in veterans pensions and other allowances as part of the commitments of the government of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as regards the studies about our duty to pay Canadian citizens certain sums of money other than salaries for work done or interest on capital, I feel that they are not undertaken with the primary concern of meeting the basic needs of our citizens, but always for considerations other than the right to existence which is the right of every citizen all through life, whether a soldier or an ordinary citizen, the son of a soldier or the son of an ordinary citizen, the widow of a soldier or of an ordinary man, who works the whole year through and who is liable also to be a victim of incapacity or of premature death on the workfront instead of the battlefield.

Mr. Speaker, the man who dies at work is also serving his country without enjoying the same benefits as soldiers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order. I suggest to the hon. member for Compton that the debate must bear on the terms of the amendment and the subamendment under consideration, which concern the second report of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, as well as allowances and pensions paid to veterans.

The fact that the hon. member was going to engage in a discussion which goes beyond the scope of this debate leads me to remind him that even if his remarks suggest that other Canadians are in need of government aid and that these people may be considered just as important as veterans, the hon. member must just the same speak directly to the amendment and the subamendment now under consideration.

Mr. Latulippe: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; it is perhaps true that I somewhat wandered from the subject, but I think that those comments are pertinent. However, as a result of your suggestion, I will try to discuss only the amendment and subamendment concerning the passage of the legislation and the carrying out of the reports' recommendations, especially those of the Woods report and the many questions raised therein.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words on pension rates. Those rates were not referred to the committee to survey the work and organization of the Canadian Pension Commission, or Woods committee. It,

Veterans Allowance Increases

however, heard statements on the matter which were summarized in its report. The rates now in force and their relation with the standard of living in Canada were dealt with in a special study. The government intends to take it into consideration with respect of the general assessment mentioned earlier.

The amounts that have been paid since January 1, 1968, represent an annual pension of \$3,180 for single veterans and of \$4,056 for married veterans, as well as an annual supplementary allowance of \$2,400 in some cases. The supplementary pensions for pensioners' children are \$408 for the first child, \$520 for the second and \$240 per year for the others. In the case of orphans, those amounts are doubled. On the other hand, all those recommendations were accepted, I believe, almost unanimously, by the committee which recommend the adoption of the Woods report and its main recommendations.

● (4:00 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, the subamendment of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre reads in part as follows:

—that consideration be given to the making of any increases to be provided under the Pension Act or under the War Veterans Allowance Act retroactive to April 1, 1970, or to such earlier date as may be appropriate in certain cases.

We, Cr ditistes, support that subamendment, Mr. Speaker. Parliament must implement those recommendations as soon as possible, with a view to meeting the needs of veterans. The main recommendations in the white paper introduced after the publication of the Woods report should also be taken into account.

In this regard, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre mentioned several things I would have liked to say, but in order not to repeat the same thing, I shall say merely that the Cr ditistes approve the amendment of the hon. member, as well as the motion of the Progressive Conservatives, to the effect that we should, as soon as possible, implement the recommendations of the report, with a view to giving our veterans the benefits to which they are entitled.

[*English*]

Mr. Hubert Badanai (Fort William): Mr. Speaker, June 20, 1969, and again May 4 of this year, were days allotted to the opposition and they chose to deal with the subject of veterans pensions.

This is a worthwhile and welcome debate because it reflects the interest of members of all parties in the human side of the question. In all the years that I have been a member of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs—and that dates back to the time when the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) was the committee chairman—I have seldom encountered partisanship when the needs and the wellbeing of war veterans were being considered.

It may be useful to put on the record the introduction to the government's white paper on veterans pensions. It reads in part as follows:

For the past 50 years, Canada has recognized and freely accepted her obligation to pay compensation for disability and