

Supply—Veterans Affairs

work. In view of the ages of some of these men I hope that arrangements can be made for a local dentist to do this work for them so they will not be caused this unnecessary inconvenience. I note I have the support of the hon. member for Cariboo in this connection.

The other point I wish to make concerns prescriptions. There are a few veterans who require drugs repeatedly. Under the present arrangements they are required to send periodically to Shaughnessy for a new order of these drugs. Some of these men are reaching an age where they are not really capable of writing letters of that sort. I ask the minister to look into that problem to see if the officials at Shaughnessy could not give authority to some local doctor or druggist to provide the drugs required by these veterans. In some cases they find it very difficult to comply with this regulation.

These are my remarks at the present time. I know there are others who want to speak and I hope these estimates will be completed by six o'clock so these veterans will have their fears removed.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the minister a question or two about the Woods report. My understanding is that the board of inquiry, or whatever they call themselves, completed their hearings around June 15 last year. Then, of course, the board reviewed the evidence in order to write its report. My understanding is that the report was completed in October and has been awaiting translation for months. On February 8, as recorded on page 6501 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich asked the minister a question with regard to whether the Woods report had been translated. The minister replied as follows:

No, Mr. Speaker. I have no information other than what I gave the house last week. I will make inquiries, but I understand that it should be in my hands by the middle of this month.

That would be the middle of February, which is some time ago now. Then the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich asked a supplementary question:

In view of the fact that it has already taken four months to complete the translation, will the minister now in any event study the report in English so that a decision may be expedited?

So many things have gone wrong with the present administration that I am not surprised that the translation of the Woods report has been delayed. However, it seems to me the minister has not shown much initiative in

[Mr. Herridge.]

pressing for the translation of that report. Why are the veterans placed at the bottom of the list with regard to the translation of reports? So far as veterans are concerned the investigation by the Woods committee with regard to the Pension Act was considered and is still considered to be of vital importance. It has been delayed for years. The committee, I believe, was quite competent to review the matter, so why this endless delay? The minister says, I have not received the report. Who has the report? Where is it in this great conglomeration of government administration? To whom was the report made? Was it made to the minister or the Prime Minister? In whose hands is that report and why can it not be translated? This is a clear case of discrimination against the veterans of this country.

It seems to me that one of the priority tasks last fall should have been the translation of that report and tabling it in the house as well as referring it to the standing committee on veterans affairs. The time to work on it would have been during the course of the winter. As I see it now, we are not going to have this report in our hands before the session comes to an end. When the next session starts there will be delays. The minister will say if he is then the minister, and I express the hope that he may be transferred to another department, that he has not received the report or it has not been translated. A whole year will have gone by before the disability pensioners of this country have any idea whether or not justice is going to be done to them at long last.

The hon. member for Kootenay West mentioned once again that the basic pension of the disability pensioners should be adjusted. It bears no relationship to conditions and has no relationship to the sacrifice that has been made by these men. We have been looking to the Woods report to present a solution to this problem.

I conclude by remarks, Mr. Chairman, by asking the minister to give us an explanation as to why he cannot get action on the simple matter of the translation of this report. We have had all sorts of other things translated and reports filed but, oh no, if it is a veterans affairs matter it is at the bottom of the list. I hold the minister responsible for this shabby neglect of the disability pensioners of this country.

• (5:10 p.m.)

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Chairman, my remarks will be brief. First of all I want to echo the