

The CHAIRMAN: The way it has been done in the past is the way Mr. Bennett is proposing to make his amendment.

Mr. BROOKS: That is not the way it was done in the Pension Act.

The CHAIRMAN: I have sent for the record on that. I am interested to see it. I was not there at the time.

Mr. BENNETT (*Grey North*): I consulted Dr. Ollivier last year on this and he advised me that the procedure we followed last year is the correct procedure.

The CHAIRMAN: I also consulted him last year, and he told me at that time that this is the only way that we can operate, that is to make recommendations in regard to a bill which is submitted to us. That is why I was very careful to ask Mr. Bennett if he was going to move this in the proper form, and not to do something that would mean that we are turning the bill down. Putting it in other words, by passing the motion we are recommending that the government consider it further instead of passing the bill as referred to us. It is my duty as chairman to point that out to you before you vote.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Could I explain what really happened, because I actually know what happened? I think that Mr. Brooks moved an amendment urging the 33½ per cent increase in pensions. I moved an amendment for 25 per cent increase, seconded by Mr. Cruikshank. No vote was taken at the time. It lay on the table during the Easter recess, I think, for about a month. Then when we reassembled, I distinctly remember the late Hon. Ian Mackenzie coming to me and saying that the government had considered that amendment and were going to accept that recommendation.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I thought. The government indicated it was ready to accept it.

Mr. HERRIDGE: The vote was taken on the amendment, and it was defeated, and then the vote was taken on my amendment and it was carried unanimously. The government accepted the recommendation of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The committee was already sure that the government was going to accept it, when it voted.

Mr. PEARKES: Is not this a somewhat similar situation? You have said that the government is not prepared to go higher than these allowances. Surely that statement was made before the Legion presented this brief to this committee, and before this committee had an opportunity of discussing that matter. Could we not follow much the same procedure as was done in the case of the Pensions Act, where you and a parliamentary assistant interviewed the minister, and the minister saw his colleagues? I think that they would come back to an increase to these ceilings after the representations which have been made by the Legion. Could we not at least try that? Could not you and the parliamentary assistant interview the minister and tell the minister what the Legion has said and what is obviously the opinion of this committee, and then report back to the committee what the government's final decision is?

The CHAIRMAN: Well, we could take a chance on that.

Mr. PEARKES: We have to take a chance on doing something.

The CHAIRMAN: As I have already suggested to the committee, should we not pass the bill and put through the increases that have been already agreed to, and then we can consider asking the government to hear representations made to us to go further? Mr. Pearkes has suggested that we adopt the other procedure—and that is quite in order. All I am saying is that it is a matter for the committee to decide which way we should proceed.