

armed forces have direct representation. There are many things of which they complain, as every hon. member knows. For example, there is the question of dependents' allowances. There is an angle which should be straightened out, and if I represented exclusively the armed forces I would draw attention to it; in fact I have done so on several occasions during the past two years. I refer to the practice of discontinuing the allowance to dependents when the man is absent without leave for more than twenty-one days. There are a number of such cases at the present time. If the absence is longer than a couple of months the allowance is cut off. It is a pathetic situation. The man is away; the woman has a family, and often she is put in the position where she is obliged to place the children in a home. It is a crying shame, if the army accepts the responsibility of taking a man and placing him in the forces and he commits an infraction of military law, that his dependents should be punished for it. He himself should be punished; but he is not, because his food and clothing are provided for, and even after he is picked up he is no worse off. His wife and family, however, have to go through a period of misery and degradation waiting for the allowance and the straightening up of the situation. There is quite a lot of that, and it is something which should be taken care of. The attention of the house has been drawn to it on many occasions.

Again, the increase of pay looks very nice on paper and is a good gesture, but it is not working out as it should, and it is not what it should be. My understanding was that the soldier was to receive twenty cents additional and that his pay would be increased to \$1.50 a day without any strings on it, but I find that quite a lot of strings are attached to it. He must be in the army for four months before he gets the first ten cents, and then only upon the recommendation of his commanding officer. When he has been in the army for six months he receives another ten cents, again upon the recommendation of his commanding officer. Discretionary powers are placed in the hands of the commanding officer. If he recommends it, the man gets the ten cents; if he does not consider him an efficient soldier, the extra twenty cents is withheld. If he has a crime sheet or has been confined to barracks, he is not considered an efficient soldier, and accordingly he does not get the increase. Also, he must make application for it. Consequently there are strings on this increase, and I contend that there should not be, if the government meant to award the increase of pay to the armed forces. I had accepted the statement as I saw it in the

press, and I did not know the facts until I came to Ottawa, since the opening of the house. There is unfortunately quite a lot of friction in connection with the administration of this matter, and there should be service representatives in the house to take care of it.

I am concerned about the treatment of the soldier. The soldier has a definite place in the future of this country. I do not like the present trend of events, and I am particularly anxious that the soldier is given everything that we think he is fighting for. I do not want to see any antagonisms created in the mind of the fellow who is overseas to-day and will come back here some time. There are elements in this country that would like to use him for their own purposes, and there are developments which may make this possible. I believe every hon. member would be well advised to see to it that those at present in the armed services, both men and women, are well taken care of, and that everything we can do for them is done. Let us not make gestures that we are going to do something and then put all kinds of administrative stop-blocks which build up antagonism. Far better not to do anything than to put forward an attractive paper programme and give it an administration which will not make it workable.

The Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Mackenzie) is sitting opposite. He knows the problems of rehabilitation, the plans necessary to deal with them, and the run-around they are getting. There is resentment right across the country. I am not speaking here to-night for the purpose of creating antagonism or helping to break that machinery down. I want to see it work; there is no other hon. member who tries harder to make it work than I do. But the administration with respect to the whole programme is not what it should be. It is developing many illusions which I do not like to see developed, and making it possible for people to capitalize on it whom I do not want to see capitalizing on it.

I make these observations in passing on account of the fact that someone has said that the mover and the seconder of the address in reply to the speech from the throne represent in this house the armed forces. If the soldiers are to be represented here, I want to see them represented in the way I mentioned, namely, by being sent here by a free election, nominated by the troops themselves, and having their own programme. It will then be our duty to see that that programme, embodying the hopes and aspirations of the services and brought direct from them to this house, is carried into effect.