

The Address—Mr. Poulin

At Remembrance day ceremonies held November 11 in the constituency of Beauce, I had the opportunity of reaffirming in the presence of hundreds of local veterans the admiration I personally feel for them and the feelings of pride the people of the whole constituency have towards them.

Wreaths were then laid by county officers, and by each of the parishes, at the foot of a splendid monument erected to the glorious memory of the Beauce county men who laid down their lives in the two world wars.

The perfectly organized ceremony was most touching. Whoever has not heard of the Chaudiere regiment's exploits really knows very little about the heroic history of French-Canadian servicemen. However, colourful ceremonies such as these remind us that our departed heroes left behind widows and orphans who need our help.

They also remind us that among those who survived the great adventure are some who can no longer earn their livelihood under normal conditions. Well, it is the duty of the state to be generous towards them and to remember that glory is not sufficient to quell hunger and to protect from cold and hardship.

I am therefore very happy about the statement made in this house by the Minister of Veterans Affairs on November 16. According to his statement the basic rate of veterans pensions will now be increased from \$94 to \$125. This, in my humble opinion, is very acceptable.

In the case of the married pensioner, the allowance to his wife will be increased from \$31 to \$45, which again seems very good to me.

In the case of children, however, I must voice my disapproval because the increase is practically insignificant, being only \$1. The amount is increased from \$19 to \$20 for the first child and the others seem to have been forgotten. It is about the same in the case of widows' children.

I am quite satisfied with the 33 odd per cent increase in the pension to widows of pensioners.

I feel it my duty, however, to tell the government they should have laid more emphasis on child welfare, through a more substantial allowance, one in keeping with the new pensions granted to the father or

mother. This would have enabled veterans and their families to live a more normal family life.

The minister will allow me, I presume, to call his attention to a matter which I consider very important. On the very day the minister announced the amendment to the war veterans Pension Act, the member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) asked if adopted children would benefit to the same extent as the others. The minister replied that he would gladly consider the matter. I am glad the minister did not answer immediately. If this question had been answered in the negative in such a Christian and civilized country as Canada, it would have been most unfortunate. I now urge the minister to study all the aspects of the problem before giving a definite answer.

The minister, whom I know as a man of sound ideas and for whom I have great respect, will surely not deny that the question of adoption is of primary importance in Canada and particularly in the province of Quebec. There is to this problem a moral as well as a social and in some respects even an economic aspect which our statesmen are in duty bound to scrutinize before coming to a decision.

As far as I am concerned I humbly and honestly believe that by all means adoption should be generally encouraged and favoured. One feels pity, and rightly so, for stateless aliens. How then can one remain indifferent to the undeserved misfortune befalling young children in this country who are without parents, without a family, without a home. Their past history does not matter. They are human beings like ourselves; they have a soul and a mind like other people; they are the work of a single and universal Creator; they are Canadians and we are in duty bound to treat them as such. Fortunately, the acceptance of this duty provides, of itself, many consolations and deep happiness for those who are willing to fulfil it generously. There lies, for the government, an excellent opportunity of proving that they consider spiritual concepts as important as material concepts. I am therefore certain that the minister will meet no difficulty in convincing his colleagues in the cabinet that an allowance must be granted for adopted children, as it is for others.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to add a few words about a subject which, to my mind, is equally