

GREAT WAR VETERANS' GRATUITY.  
CLAIM.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER AND  
COMPARATIVE TABLES OF ALLOW-  
ANCES TO VETERANS SUBMITTED  
BY HON. MR. ROWELL.

On the Orders of the Day:

Hon. NEWTON W. ROWELL (President of the Council): Mr. Speaker, at the request of the Prime Minister I desire to make the following statement with reference to the position of the Government in the matter of a further bonus or war service gratuity to returned soldiers.

The position of the Government is set forth in a statement prepared by the Prime Minister on Saturday last for submission to the House in answer to a question placed upon the Order Paper by the hon. member for West Edmonton (Mr. Griesbach). The Prime Minister intended to make this statement in the House on Monday but owing to his indisposition he was not able to do so. The statement, including the correspondence which has passed between the Prime Minister and the Great War Veterans' Association is as follows:

The Great War Veterans' Association,  
Citizen Building,  
Ottawa, August 23rd, 1919.

The Right Honourable Sir Robert L. Borden,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
Ottawa, Ont.,

Sir,—I am instructed to request the early consideration by your Government of the resolution advanced by the Annual Convention of this Association, advocating the appointment of a Parliamentary Commission to determine the possibilities of a bonus re-establishment scheme.

The decision of the Government in this matter is being awaited with keen interest by returned soldiers.

I am, Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
(Sgd.) C. G. MacNeil,  
Dominion Secretary-Treasurer,  
G.W.V.A. of Canada.

The resolution inclosed is as follows:

The Great War Veterans' Association of Canada,  
Inc.

Dominion Convention, Vancouver, B.C.,  
June 30th to July 5th, 1919.

Resolution No. 3.

Whereas it is due to the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces, and imperative in the national interest that effective means should be promptly found for the re-establishment of the soldier and his assimilation into the civil life of the country;

And whereas it is essential that such re-establishment should be accomplished in such a [Mr. Doherty.]

manner as to place the soldier as nearly as possible on an equal footing with those whose business or professional career or other earning power has not been interrupted by Military Service, and so that he may be adequately rehabilitated in civil life and the better enabled to bear his share of the immense burden of taxation which the War has placed upon the country;

And whereas it is desirable that such re-establishment should be accomplished with a minimum of administrative cost, so that the soldier may receive the maximum of benefit from the money expended and the burden to the country may not be unduly increased;

And whereas, in view of the serious unemployment problem that faces the country in the immediate future, to accomplish these objects in a manner equitable to every individual citizen under the varying conditions of this vast Dominion the most satisfactory system is one of gratuity payments:

Be it therefore resolved that the Great War Veterans' Association of Canada in annual convention assembled this second day of July, 1919, urge upon the Government of Canada the necessity of the immediate adoption of a system of bonus payments as the most satisfactory and effective means of re-establishing the soldiers;

And be it further resolved: that after careful thought and full consideration, we are of opinion that the granting of such bonus upon an equality basis be limited only by the Country's ability to pay, so as to enable the beneficiary to become efficient-re-established with security and happiness. The classification of beneficiaries, the method of distribution and administration to be agreed and decided upon by a joint Parliamentary and G.W.V.A. Commission.

And that this bonus should be in addition to any gratuity or pension for disability resulting from service; And that in the case of members of the Expeditionary Forces whose death occurred whilst in the service or after their discharge therefrom, such bonus shall be paid to their dependents;

All of the benefits contained in this resolution shall apply to those resident in Canada prior to 4th August, 1914, who served in the Imperial Forces, and are now, or may be at any future date domiciled in Canada.

The reply of the Prime Minister reads:

Prime Minister's Office.  
Ottawa, Ont., August 27, 1919.

Dear Mr. MacNeil:—

Your letter of the 23rd instant is before me. The Government has given very careful and attentive consideration to the resolution of the Great War Veterans' Association, passed on the 2nd day of July last, which urges upon the Government the immediate adoption of a system of bonus payments as the most satisfactory and effective means of re-establishing the soldiers.

The gratuity which was provided by the Order in Council of December last is more liberal, I believe, than that granted in any other country. Its purpose as disclosed by the provisions