

cated by our leader on many occasions and by many members in this house since the 1945 election.

With reference to the remarks the minister made about the sending out of adjustment cheques, I was not quite clear as to their import. I would ask him to state, when he closes the debate, if it is true that these cheques are now being made out and are to be sent out early in April; because if that is correct, it indicates to me that the government is firmly resolved that there is to be no further increase in the basic rate of pension.

The minister also mentioned the various scales of pension paid to privates, non-commissioned officers and junior officers as compared with the higher rates of pensions paid to the senior officers. As I pointed out only a few days ago when speaking on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, there is a tremendous difference there. A private receives \$900, whereas a senior officer receives \$2,700 a year; and now under the new rate the private will receive \$1,044 while the senior officer will still receive \$2,700. Why is there this great discrimination? Why the difference between the amount paid to junior officers and privates and the amount paid to senior officers? In world war II we found in the ranks men from every profession, station and walk of life. We found the same condition among the officers of world war II. How can the minister continue this unjust discrimination? A private may be receiving \$900 a year and a brigadier \$2,700; yet in civil life both engaged in the same occupation—bank clerks, labourers, teachers, or farmers. Why should we carry into civil life this class distinction which has no place in this democratic country? For I say to the minister that the payment of these large pensions to higher ranks makes it most difficult for the people of Canada to understand why the department can approve them and yet quibble, chisel and grant an increase of only \$12 a month to the privates, n.c.o.'s and junior officers. I for one am most anxious that the minister should make some explanation on this point. After all, the loss of a leg, an arm or an eye—or any other disability—should demand the same payment to the private as to the brigadier. There is no question that the private went through far more hardship than any brigadier, and each may have suffered the same pain or torture as a result of his disability.

The bill also provides for an increase in pay to the thirteen pension commissioners, \$1,000 a year, from \$7,000 to \$8,000. The estimates tabled a day or so ago showed that the commissioners received in salaries for the

past year the small sum of \$100,500. It is most unfortunate that the minister has seen fit in this bill to include an increase of \$1,000 to the commissioners when in the same bill he is granting an increase of only \$12 in the basic rate of pension. There are few in this house who will not agree that \$7,000 is not a bad salary. A short time ago all county court judges in the province of Ontario received a salary of only \$5,000 a year. A bill was introduced in this house by which the salary of county court judges was increased to \$6,666 a year. Apparently the government thought that this was a proper and fair salary for a judge under present conditions. A judge is one who has had long experience in the law and who holds a high and important position in the community. He carries out the important duties of the judiciary which is the bulwark of democracy in our country. Even with the increase recently granted to judges, they are still below the present pay of the pension commissioners, which is \$7,000; and it is now proposed to give them \$8,000 a year.

In Ontario the magistrates receive from \$5,000 to \$7,000 a year. I think that the pay, work and responsibility of a judge or magistrate can be fairly compared with the pay, work and responsibility of a pension commissioner. Referring in this connection to the pensions advocate, my understanding was that it was his duty to protect the interests and welfare of the veteran; certainly the veteran needs somebody there to protect him. This important person, the chief pensions advocate, up until this year received the sum of \$5,100 a year, but I believe there is an increase bringing him up to \$5,680. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that if the pension commissioners are worth \$8,000, then the chief pensions advocate, who has all these thousands of cases across the country to look after, is worth considerably more than the amount he is receiving.

Up to 1944 the pension commissioners received \$6,000 a year. Either at the end of 1944 or in 1945 they were granted an increase of \$1,000 and were paid \$7,000 for the years 1945, 1946 and 1947. Apparently the commissioners, or whoever were responsible, were able to convince the minister at that time that, owing to the increased cost of living and other conditions, they were entitled to an increase. I am not arguing about that. They received their increase. But at the same time I would point out that the poor veteran who had to bear the increased cost of living and everything else received no increase in his pension. Now the commissioners are going to be granted another \$1,000, which will make a total increase of 33½ per cent over their