

*Supply—Veterans Affairs*

involved in preparing the cheques and sending them out to the veterans concerned and to their dependants.

I received many representations with respect to this matter and I have no hesitation in saying that the veterans and their dependants were very worried about the possibility of an early dissolution of parliament as the result of the confidence motion. I am pleased that we are considering these estimates now in time for the office work to be done so that the veterans will have no further reason to worry.

There is another matter which I am sure will come before the standing committee on veterans affairs when it meets, I presume, after the Woods report is tabled in both languages. I am referring to the new formula which I expect the departmental committee has devised and will bring before the committee so that in future disability pensions will be based on a sound foundation. I remember quite well that when the first act was drawn up the basic pension was based on the wages of a casual labourer or someone working in maintenance work in the House of Commons. There is no relationship today between the scale of pensions and the original intention when the act was established. I trust that the minister's committee will recommend something to correct that injustice.

I have a word or two to say about war veterans allowances. It is late in this session, but I expect that when the standing committee on veterans affairs meets to study the recommendations of the Woods report with respect to the administration of the Canadian pension commission the commission will also make representations before the committee with regard to certain changes they think are desirable in war veterans allowances. I will not say any more about this matter at this time because I would like to hear the representations from veterans organizations.

I would like to say that the veterans organizations seem to be very responsible since they have had an opportunity to make representations to the government. I remember a different set of circumstances which prevailed in the United States where in some cases such organizations asked for government action which could not be justified by the circumstances at the time. But I do want to pay a tribute to all veterans organizations in this country for their responsible approach to these problems, having in mind that these

pensions have to be paid for from the consolidated revenue fund and having in mind the needs of the veterans and their dependants whom they represent.

● (5:00 p.m.)

Before resuming my seat I want to bring one or two other matters to the attention of the minister. I want to thank the minister for his willingness to have officials of the Veterans Land Act administration go into the Arrow lakes and other areas affected by the Columbia treaty project. He will be interested to know that one of his officials went to Kelowna not so long ago to deal with a problem of a veteran. He was very concerned about it. Later the veteran was pleased with the result of this man's visit. He was satisfied because he got other land to compensate him for the land that was to be flooded. Other arrangements were also made, as a result of support from one of the minister's officials, and the veteran appreciates this.

This department is reaching its closing phase so I ask the minister to urge his officials to go into that area again to clean up the few odd cases that remain. I should like to deal particularly with a veteran who is not a settler under the Veterans Land Act. He is an old veteran with whom I served in the first world war. I am informed that the B.C. Hydro and power authority is going to expropriate his property. His wife is a rather vigorous lady so they will have quite a time in getting that veteran and his wife off the property if they send in the police.

The man in question is very ill so his wife has had to carry on the battle in his name. She has done an excellent job. They have a very good farm in the Arrow lakes district some six or seven miles from Nakusp. I trust that the minister will get one of his officials to go there and have a chat with this man to see if the parties cannot be brought together in order that this project will not be marred by some unfortunate incident. It is unfortunate for the veteran concerned because he has a very fine property. I thank the minister for doing this on one or two other occasions for men who had not settled under the Veterans Land Act. I know of one or two instances in which, as a result of a visit from a Veterans Land Act official, the veteran got a few thousand dollars more from B.C. Hydro and agreed that the compensation was fair.

One other matter about which I receive some complaint concerns veterans who have to have dentures or dental treatment. They are required to go to Shaughnessy for this