

Mr. SPEAKMAN: Colonel Biggar would be quite satisfactory.

Mr. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I have not changed my opinion on this question. I wish to state it again. The Legion has a certain membership that unquestionably, in the main, represents the difficulties of the soldier. There is no question about that at all, and no one for one moment would suggest that any soldier is not free to go to the Legion for assistance. I can bear testimony to that, and I know that the Legion will fight his case regardless whether he is a member or not. I have not forgotten, however, the large amount of time and expense wasted by this Committee in 1928. I am satisfied that if we organize properly, we can avoid wasting time and money this year.

In regard to what has been said I would agree that Colonel Biggar should be retained as the legal adviser to draft this legislation, and in addition I think the Legion would be well advised if there was another counsel to prepare and draft the case on their behalf. Officers of the Legion have had considerable experience dealing with soldier problems but they have not been represented by counsel nor by anyone experienced in presenting problems to a judicial body. This Committee is a semi-judicial body, and on all legislative matters coming before the House, whether private or otherwise, I am of the opinion the case should be presented by counsel. I recall in other matters, for example Church Union, every side was represented by counsel and on every important matter with which Parliament has had to deal the different sides have been represented by counsel and their case properly organized. A year ago when the Sun Life Assurance Company had a matter before Parliament, and the handling of that case was taken from counsel, great difficulty arose in its presentation. I would refer to matters under the Banking Act or anything you wish to name, it is presented in much better form if the case is conducted by counsel. I am of the opinion that if the Legion is informed that counsel will be available for the presentation of their case before this Committee, they will endorse it. I believe we will save time and expense and possibly not be forced to come back here next year to do this thing over again.

Mr. ARTHURS: Mr. Chairman, I have no objection to this suggestion. When I spoke on this subject at first I recommended two counsel, one for the unorganized soldiers and one for the Legion. I may have been wrong in making that suggestion and I am quite willing to admit that one counsel could handle this case for all returned men.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the opinion of the Committee that we advise the Legion that they may have counsel and that we will pay his fee?

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I do not consider this is limited to organization, it is a matter of recording the verdict of this Committee so that the House will enact legislation on that basis. I think if the Legion is offered counsel and chooses to avail itself of that privilege the best man that can be obtained should be engaged. His services will not only assist the Committee and the house, but also the returned men all over the country. If we do that, the Legion will feel that their organization has been given every assistance and that finally something will be done that is not open to misinterpretation.

Mr. McINTOSH: Just who is going to represent the Legion; they have men at the head of their organization who deal with matters all over Canada. How are you going to get all the evidence through one man?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Legion can be trusted to gather all the evidence.

Mr. HEPBURN: If the Legion does not follow this suggestion what will be the result?

The CHAIRMAN: We will leave that to them.