

May I add a word or two, Mr. Chairman, in so far as this whole thing is concerned and how we feel about it?

The grants spring from the veteran primarily whether it be a disability pension or war veterans' allowance but you also have a dependent or dependents in each case and, therefore, we feel that cannot be ignored in so far as what I have mentioned as an example, of the widow who has a home and having two or three rooms to rent. As I have said, we have tried to confine ourselves generally to this increase and we trust that you will give it every consideration.

Mr. Chairman, if I may mention, while I am here, we find no fault whatever with the basic structure of war veterans' allowance and its application through the years. It has to our Imperial federation been more than a God-send, perhaps small as it may seem, it has been a God-send to those 2,000 or 3,000 of which we have been speaking.

You would be amazed at the letters we have received thanking us for what we have done and thanking you too as a parliamentary committee for your consideration in this respect.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that is about all I have to say in so far as the increase is concerned and perhaps a minute or two later I would like to clear up a matter which is very strong in the minds of the Imperial federation and which I heard mentioned this morning by the non-pensioned widows and also by numerous organizations in so far as the re-valuation of the pound sterling is concerned as applying to British pensions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Jones. Mr. Gregory is dominion president. Do you wish to say a word, Mr. Gregory?

Mr. Clifford GREGORY (Dominion President, The Federation of British Canadian Veterans of Canada): Mr. Chairman, hon. members of the committee, there is very little I can add to what Mr. Jones, our pensions officer, has said. He has given you this brief pretty well as the veterans passed it and intended it to be presented and I do wish at this time to thank the hon. members for listening to our presentation. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with our practice, for a few minutes we will question the officers of the association with respect to their brief.

Mr. LENNARD: I would like to ask Mr. Jones for his comment on the present valuation of the pound sterling as it affects some British Canadian veterans. You mentioned a moment ago that you wished to comment on it.

Mr. JONES: If it meets with your approval, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the question, Comrade Lennard. It has become a bone of contention, this devaluation of the pound sterling in so far as the British pensioner is concerned. It cannot possibly be new to the members of this committee; you must have heard it from numbers of your constituencies and also war veteran members.

I would like to convey to you what the veterans have done, how far we have gone in determining this question which, I regret to say, is in a matter of abeyance and will remain so for some time to come. Primarily, we wrote to Captain George Bowler, our good friend and representative of the British Ministry of Pensions, asking his opinion regarding any possibility of re-valuating the pound sterling as applying to the British pensioner and I do not think you will mind, Captain Bowler, if I quote a word or two from your letter in this respect—I hope not. He has based his opinion on a survey that he made throughout the dominion, I think, during 1951—the date of this letter is December—and he went from one end of the dominion to the other to ascertain the feelings of the veterans and also to determine how many were unemployed, how the picture of unemployment was affecting the British pensioner. And,