

The Address—Mr. Knowles

pension of 30 per cent which, of course, brings in \$37.50 a month. He is a married man. He has no other source of income, so he is on war veterans allowance. Because of the ceiling he receives the maximum permitted, \$54.16 a month. Those two items taken together, namely his \$37.50 disability pension and his veterans allowance of \$54.16, come to \$91.66 a month. That is the ceiling for a burnt-out pensioner. Both this man and his wife are over 70 years of age. There is now a new old age pension payable without a means test. What can they expect, because of that? Can they expect that their position will be improved to the extent of \$80 a month? After all, many other people in this country, where both the man and wife are over 70 years of age, will have their positions actually improved to that extent. Persons on superannuation from private corporations or from the government service, including retired judges, senators and many other people who are 70 years and over, will have their actual cash positions improved by \$80 a month.

This veteran and his wife can qualify for the old age pension. But when they get that \$80 as a pension, and it is ascertained by the war veterans allowance board that they are also getting \$37.50, as a veteran's disability pension—and this of course would add up to \$117.50, which is in excess of the ceiling allowed by the War Veterans Allowance Act—the whole of the \$54.16 war veterans allowance will be cancelled. It is true that this veteran's position will be slightly better than it is today. But it will not be better to the extent of the \$80 a month that will be received by the average Canadian man and wife over 70 years of age. I submit it is grossly unfair to the veterans of this country to discriminate against them in that way.

It so happens that there is to be an increase in disability pensions. This means that under the new rates the \$37.50 will become \$51 a month. If he were not 70 years of age—and at this point I am speaking hypothetically, because there will be other cases like it—the fact that the \$37.50 becomes \$51 a month would result in a reduction of his war veterans allowance to \$40.66, so that he would stay at the ceiling of \$91.66 a month.

So I say that in view of the fact that, whatever their positions, most Canadians 70 years of age and over will receive the pension and have an actual increase in income to that extent, it is not fair that the one group that finds it gets an increase, but not the full value of the increase, should be the group we know as our burnt-out pensioners.

The next case with which I wish to deal is that of a veteran living in Transcona, Manitoba. This veteran is the recipient of a

Canadian National Railways pension amounting to \$63.91 a month. He has nothing else, so he is drawing a war veterans allowance of \$27.75. In other words his Canadian National pension and his war veterans allowance bring him, as a married man, to the ceiling of \$91.66 a month. He is over 70 years of age, and his wife is 64. He can qualify for the \$40 old age pension, without the means test, but his wife cannot qualify for anything. But when he gets the \$40 old age pension without the means test, and the war veterans allowance board discovers that between that and his Canadian National pension he is getting a total of \$103.91 a month, hon. members know what will happen to his war veterans allowance of \$27.75. It will be taken away from him entirely. So on the one hand he gets \$40 a month from the old age pension legislation passed at this session and, on the other, he loses \$27.75 from the war veterans allowance, not only because the means test is still in the War Veterans Allowance Act but because nothing has been done at this session to moderate or to change it in any way.

I submit that when these things come into effect, and Canadians are actually up against the fact that, unlike any others, this group will have the experience of being deprived of the war veterans allowance either in whole or in part, if it is to receive the old age pension, the people of Canada will be deeply annoyed, and rightly so.

These are cases which demonstrate not only that there should be an increase in the amount of the war veterans allowance, but something should be done at this session to make sure that these veterans do not have what they are given on the one hand taken away on the other.

The next case I should like to place on record is particularly tragic, when one realizes how it works out. I now refer to a married veteran living in Vancouver. He, too, is a Canadian National Railways pensioner; in fact, he comes under all three of these provisions at the present time. He is drawing the railway pension of \$34.25 a month, he has an army disability pension at the rate of 5 per cent which, because he is married, works out at \$6.25 a month, and he has a war veterans allowance of \$51.16 a month. He gets only \$51.16 because of the ceiling. Those three amounts added together mean that he is getting \$91.66 a month.

This veteran has written to me expressing the thought that he had dared to hope that he had a pretty good chance of having his position improved. In fact he believed he had several chances. He is drawing the Canadian National pension, and there have