

Mr. ANDERSON: Well, this is something which the advocate can do if he desires, even now. Normally we would not direct him to do that because we have no authority to do so. But, in respect of giving reasons for our decisions, the applicant invariably receives a copy of the decision which contains all the reasons, and if he is not satisfied with the reasons contained therein he can write and ask for more complete information and we will be glad to provide them. So, there is no real problem there. If he really feels that the reasons as outlined in the actual decision are not sufficient he can write and ask for more details if he wants them, and we will be only too glad to supply them.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Have you any idea of the percentage of appeals against decisions of the commission on the basis of the benefit of the doubt clause?

Mr. ANDERSON: There is a very large percentage, particularly in the case of world war I claims. I would say 70 to 80 per cent of the world war I claims are granted now under the provisions of the benefit of the doubt clause.

Mr. MACEWAN: I would like to put a question in respect of the work load on the commission at the present time. Is this work load heavy? In other words, are there many cases which the commission is now examining which are awaiting a decision? Could you give us some particulars in that connection?

Mr. ANDERSON: Mr. MacEwan, the number of claims being dealt with is quite large but over the years the figure has remained fairly constant. For instance, in 1951 we dealt with 41,717 claims. In 1963-64—and the year is not over yet—we estimate we will deal with something of the order of 50,000 or so. So, you will note there is only a small variation. The work load remains fairly constant over the years.

Mr. HARLEY: I have a question along the same lines. Could you tell me how many of those claims would be new, how many would be reboards and what would be the number of old claims reopened?

Mr. ANDERSON: Of course, each applicant, in the case of world war I, or the regular force, has an opportunity to come back three times to us, the first and second hearings, and then the appeal. However, world war II and Korean veterans can come back as many times as they wish, if they produce new evidence. Many of those mentioned above will be renewal hearings. This figure represents the total number of decisions made.

Mr. HARLEY: Are you getting many new claims now or are most of them old claims?

Mr. ANDERSON: Yes, amazingly enough we do get a substantial number of new claims each year.

Mr. HERRIDGE: And, are these from world war II in most cases?

Mr. ANDERSON: Yes, but we still get new claims from world war I veterans. As recent as last year we were still getting claims from world war I veterans who were applying for the first time for gunshot wounds. It is amazing but it is happening.

Mr. PATTERSON: I am in a position to make the same observation as Mr. Chatterton did a few moments ago in respect of complaints received from veterans, and most of them have to do with decisions handed down by the commission.

Do you feel the regulations under which you must operate are flexible enough to give consideration to and make a decision on the merits of the individual case rather than looking at it just as an application of stringent rules and regulations?

Mr. ANDERSON: Let me say that we have no stringent rules and regulations; the only thing that binds us is the act itself. The regulations are flexible and are being amended and changed almost daily. If we find a regulation is resulting in some hardship on certain classes of applicants we look at it very carefully and, if necessary, we seek amendments. We really have only