

That this House urges the Minister of Transport to place a stay on this order until all appeals have been heard.

Madam Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for this motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

PAYMENT OF BENEFITS TO WORKERS—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, a recent appeal by employees of Heckett Engineering and Cross-town Mobile Wash was upheld by the UIC Board of Referees. However, the payment of benefits is now being withheld subject to a UIC decision on whether or not to appeal further. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Beaches (Mr. Young):

That the Minister of Employment and Immigration instruct the UIC not to appeal and to make immediate payment of all moneys these workers have been denied and to which they are entitled.

Madam Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for this motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

EXPOSURE OF HONG KONG VETERANS TO PARASITIC DISEASE— REQUEST FOR INQUIRY

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Veterans Affairs I would like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs who, I understand, is the Minister of National Defence. Problems are mounting within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans are having to wait up to five years to have their pension applications processed and, to date, no headway has been made in reducing the excessive delays. Now, to add insult to injury, the Liberal government refuses to investigate the potentially fatal Asian parasite disease which may be affecting 950 Hong Kong veterans. The government refuses to do this, despite the fact that the Hong Kong Veterans Association contacted the Pension Commission close to three years ago and has yet to receive a response, and also despite the fact that a cure has been available since 1967.

Oral Questions

Will the acting minister launch an immediate inquiry into this potentially fatal problem, and will he report back to the House with his findings as soon as possible?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, I will soon be able to relay the information I received from the hon. member for Winnipeg-Assiniboine concerning this subject of what he calls the Asian parasite disease. I am sure the Minister of Veterans Affairs will do his utmost to satisfy the Hong Kong veterans, as we have been doing for the last ten years. When I left the ministry I thought the delays in pension processing were being curtailed, and were decreasing very dramatically. With the new—

An hon. Member: Bull!

Mr. Lamontagne:—pension chairman coming in, with the help of the former one, and also with the nomination of Mr. McCracken we will investigate all the mechanisms of this pension problem so that the veterans would be satisfied with the direction we give.

Mr. McKenzie: I would like to point out to the acting minister that the standing committee was informed this year that matters will get worse within Veterans Affairs in dealing with the pension applications.

PRACTICE FOLLOWED BY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): I have another supplementary question for the same acting minister in regard to the medical advisory board. I would like the minister to launch another investigation into the recent disclosure that medical examiners in the Canadian Pension Commission are breaking the law by offering opinions on veterans' cases instead of simply providing medical advice. The minister will know that the situation has become so bad that veterans have been forced to take the government to court in order to have this practice stopped.

● (1415)

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, I have noted the hon. member's remarks and I am sure that the Minister of Veterans Affairs will take note of them also. I think we will be able to correct the problem very quickly.

REQUEST THAT LEGISLATION BE INTRODUCED SIMILAR TO UNITED STATES SYSTEM

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Madam Speaker, in Saskatoon on October 19, 1981, the Minister of Veterans Affairs made the following statement:

I haven't heard any critic say that Parliament should abandon the Canadian way for any other country's system.

That statement is not correct. We have asked for the American system to be introduced in Canada. This request was raised at a standing committee hearing earlier this year. I