

amendments. The members have rejected them because they did not go far enough. Most of the members of the committee took that position until the third and final improvement was granted.

That resulted largely because of the stand taken by government supporters. Members of the opposition were not the only ones in favour of those improvements; some of the government supporters stood up and fought for them as well and refused to accept a partial solution. That is the way in which a Committee on Veterans Affairs should function and I hope we do not deviate.

Mr. Mutch, the former chairman of the committee, had long experience as chairman of Veterans Affairs committees and as parliamentary assistant. We have his ruling on this very point and a statement that the motion was in order; yet our chairman has suggested that it is out of order.

Then I would also point out to the members of this committee that they have power to overrule the chairman. The majority of this committee can say that the chairman is wrong on his ruling that this motion or on any other motion is out of order. If members of the committee fail to do that, or think that they should vote in that way, then they must take the responsibility for making it impossible for the veterans of Canada to get these benefits for a period of another year.

Mr. PEARKES: Mr. Chairman, I am not the least bit interested in where the responsibility for turning down this resolution is going to rest. I do not want to put any onus on the government, but I think the members of this committee should let the government know what we really think about this matter. I believe that in our hearts we believe that now is the time to do something for the older veterans of Canada, for those who are recipients of the war veterans' allowance, and that we should do it now. As has already been said, those men are going to grow older and many of them will be passing out.

In British Columbia we have a higher percentage than anywhere else in Canada of those older men, and there is not a week which goes by when I do not get letters from them. It seems to me that we, as a committee, should appeal to the government now to give consideration to this matter and let the government know that we, as members of the committee, would like to have an opportunity—in view of the representations which have been made by the Legion as well as of our own knowledge—to have an opportunity of investigating this matter further while we are in session and to be able to make a recommendation to the government.

I had hoped that we could make a recommendation to the House which would be acceptable to the government. We are citizens of Canada as well as members of various parties of this parliament, but it is not a question of our being here as anything else but members of the committee. I do not like the idea particularly that we are divided into supporters of the government and supporters of opposition parties. We are here as committee members, and I believe this committee really does feel that we should ask the government to let us consider this problem which has been so vividly brought to our attention in the report of the Legion. I would ask you if you possibly could accept this motion so that we can refer it to the government and then let the government know what our considered opinion is on this very important subject.

Mr. GOODE: Mr. Chairman, as far as the intent of this committee is concerned I do not think there is any doubt, but I am very surprised that Mr. Brooks would mention this matter to Mr. Green and that Mr. Pearkes would support it because I remember in the House some few days ago, and on numerous occasions before that, that the leader of that party insisted that the Prime Minister give his undertaking that no further legislation would be brought on at the present session. He insisted over the days, as you will