

Mr. CROMB: We have no statistics in that connection. There is quite a movement back and forth but we have no statistics of that sort. But, where a veteran has a small job, if it is continuous and if it is less than the allowance—in other words, it is a full time job but it does not pay very much—we will treat that as income and supplement him up to the ceiling. If it is less than four consecutive months it is casual and he receives the complete exemption. But, there are veterans who have small jobs which do not pay enough to live on, and we supplement them up to the ceiling. We call it income. Where it is employment of less than four consecutive months in one year, up to \$600 or \$900 is completely exempt.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Have you any idea of the number of cases you have dealt with on account of overpayment, and how you dealt with them generally?

Mr. CROMB: I do not know, Mr. Herridge. The number of large overpayments is not high; there are many smaller ones. This occurs sometimes through a man getting unemployment insurance benefits and the reporting date does not catch up in time. There are a number of small overpayments. We deal with them by taking a portion off the allowance, making sure he is not seriously crippled in respect of his income. Our task is to ensure the man has enough to live on comfortably in line with the schedules of the act, and we take off a small portion to recover. However, as I say, there are many of these little ones but very few large ones. However, they do occur and that is the way we deal with them.

Mr. HERRIDGE: In recent years—and I am speaking of the last six or seven years—I personally have found a big improvement because the field officers are very careful to warn their recipients in respect of the regulations in many cases. I found before that there were veterans who quite innocently had over-earned and did not intend to do so.

Mr. CROMB: That is correct. The counselling of the veterans' welfare services officers is exceptionally thorough and that avoids, as you mentioned, many overpayments.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Have you given any consideration to the effect on war veterans' allowance recipients of the Canada pension plan, if implemented?

Mr. CROMB: I have studied the white paper and looking at the plan as it stands now it would not affect us at the present time. Later on when the plan became operative and as the amounts of money we are paying now in respect of our ceilings are a little bit higher we would deal with that as income. We would have recipients coming on but we would not have to pay them so much in order to supplement them up to the ceiling.

Mr. CHATTERTON: But the situation would be different as you approached the 10-year period?

Mr. CROMB: Yes, it would come to the point where it would not cost so much. But, as long as we have a ceiling a little above that, the veterans will come on and be supplemented to our ceiling.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Is there no indication that income from a pension under the Canada pension plan might be considered as an exemption?

Mr. CROMB: No.

Mr. CHATTERTON: So that Canada pension plan contributions would be compulsory and it might happen that after a ten year period the veteran becomes ineligible for W.V.A. because he has contributed to the Canada pension plan.

Mr. CROMB: Under our act and regulations of course, it is obligatory to count all income. What you are suggesting is very similar to the case of a civil servant on a very small superannuation or an ex-railway worker on a small railway superannuation. We count that as income.