

the soldiers. It is discreditable enough that we should proclaim to the world that we are either unable or unwilling to provide for the dependents of our soldiers so that they may live in decency and comfort, but we go further than that, we insult them with instructions and advice. Here is a sample:

When, on the first of April, the Government decided that assigned pay, to the extent of at least \$15 per month should be compulsory and that every woman receiving separation allowance should, in addition, receive at least \$15 per month of her husband's or son's pay, there were many that thought that the Patriotic fund should reduce its assistance accordingly. This course may even yet be adopted. It really depends upon the soldier's wife, as to whether it shall be or not.

They say to the soldier's wife:

If you make good use of your money, you lessen the likelihood of such a revision being made. A woman's first duty when, after being a while on the Patriotic fund she finds herself less pressed financially than she was before, is to pay her husband's just debts by means of the money that comes from him as assigned pay. When this has been done, she is justified in using this same monthly allowance to adequately furnish the home and to properly clothe herself and the children.

That is how Canada is treating her soldiers at the front and their dependents. I hope the Government and their supporters are proud of the position they have taken to-night, as voiced by the Prime Minister.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. OLIVER: I say, I hope they are proud.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. OLIVER: But I must say that if they are, I am very much ashamed of them.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member, when he says he is ashamed of the position taken by the Government on this question, is surely exceeding the rules of debate.

Mr. OLIVER: I certainly wish to apologize to the House and to the Government and to withdraw the remark. I have no wish to infringe on the rules of debate, but sometimes it is difficult not to express one's feelings. I notice in the Canadian Patriotic Fund Bulletin for September, 1916, the following:

The fund pays only in case of need. There are about 105,000 families drawing separation allowance, but of these only 60,000 are on the Fund. The average of payments to these 60,

000 families is \$192 a year. If the Government administered the Fund and paid \$192 to every family, the cost over present system would be \$8,640,000 yearly. And every dollar of this would go to people who are really not in need of it.

A soldier's wife may receive half of her husband's monthly pay, say \$15; she receives \$20 of a separation allowance, or a total of \$35. She may or she may not receive from the Patriotic Fund an allowance which may amount to anywhere from five to twenty-five dollars. What is the position of this country, of this Parliament, of this Government, towards the soldier when it tells his wife that out of this immense sum, after she has provided for everything else, she may properly clothe herself and her children. At the present time the Labour Gazette gives the cost of food per family in this country at something over \$11 per week.

I ask you how much this woman is going to have to clothe herself and her family out of \$45 or \$50 a month, when she has to pay that amount for the food they eat. The Finance Minister has told us in the House how the cost of living has increased of recent years. We have been compelled to vote money to increase the salaries of civil servants, and there is a demand for increased wages all over the country. The coal strike in the West is because of the increased cost of living. But our soldiers are getting the same allowance to-day that they got in 1914; the Patriotic Fund allowance has been cut down instead of being increased, and yet we are enthusiastic about what we have done for our soldiers! We have done, the Premier says, as well, or better, than the people of any other country. Well, I am one of the citizens of this country who say that we have not done what we should have done. Whatever may have been the case in the past, when we are undertaking to compel men to serve us at the front, that is the time when we must take steps to see that those who are dependent upon the soldiers at the front shall not be stinted, and shall not be dependent upon charity. That is the time to place the maintenance of dependents of our soldiers upon the substantial footing of the Dominion treasury, and at a rate that shall give a decent living to those dependents without the intervention of charity.

Sir HERBERT AMES: My hon. friend has been quoting from documents that are from one to two years old. He is absolutely incorrect when he says the Patriotic Fund has been cutting down the allowance to the soldier's wife. If he had not had this speech