

The CHAIRMAN: But, Mr. Quelch, that would be giving them a special benefit. We do not want to discriminate against any Canadian group or to give them any special benefit if we cannot at the same time give them a benefit parallel to that which is given to the Imperial veteran.

Mr. QUELCH: My whole argument right along has been that we made the Imperial veteran eligible for the veterans allowance—that is his widow. We give him the same special benefit that we give to any Canadian.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not giving it to any Canadian veteran unless he is qualified for it.

Mr. QUELCH: We are giving it to all Canadians, to all Canadian veterans who saw service in a theatre of war. These men saw service in a theatre of war, but because they did not reside in Canada for a period of 20 years we are denying the widow's allowance to their widows just because they happened to die before they completed their period of residence. That is what I think is most unfair.

Mr. HOSKING: That leads to another case which would be similar to that, and would apply to a great number of Canadian widows. This is the case of a widow who is married to a major of the Great War and at his death—he was a Canadian, I am giving an analogous case because his widow is in the same position as the widows you are speaking about—she was married to a major and they had a certain amount of money when he became unable to work for a year or two before he died; he had money enough to live on but his widow is destitute, she has no pension or other benefit. Would she not be in exactly the same position as these Imperial widows?

The CHAIRMAN: But the widow would be eligible under the Act providing her husband, had he lived, would have been eligible.

Mr. HOSKING: Yes, but had he lived until now they would have been destitute. For some two years he was out of work.

The CHAIRMAN: And she might qualify for the widow's pension provided he had served in a theatre of war.

Mr. HOSKING: Yes, but at the time of his death he was not drawing any pension, so she can't get it.

The CHAIRMAN: But that does not affect her position.

Mr. QUELCH: I think it would be in order for us to make a recommendation that the Imperial widow should receive benefits.

The CHAIRMAN: But I am not sure that we would not be transgressing our own resolution. That was one of the recommendations of the national veterans organizations which we have already resolved; that the government should give continuous and sympathetic consideration to—it certainly involves not only a matter of policy but a substantial expenditure, and I would think that we would be in exactly the same position as we were at that time.

Mr. QUELCH: Well, while we are on this question, would it not be possible to take it up with the department and see whether or not something could be done?

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Quelch, I can assure you that this matter has been discussed with the board, and I can also assure you that it has been a matter of prolonged study for a number of years.

Mr. QUELCH: Mr. Chairman, might I ask a question right there.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Would it not be in order for us to make some recommendation along that line—

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot deal with hypothetical questions.