

the sum of forty-five shillings a week, which, translated into terms of dollars, amounts to \$36 a month.

These are the men I am pleading for. These are the type of men, the old imperial soldiers, who have nobly served the country through twenty years of residence. They have only \$36 a month if they are 100 per cent pensioners; but the scale decreases as the disability decreases, in very much the same way as the pension scale decreases for the Canadian veteran. But where the Canadian veteran draws a pension for a five per cent disability, the pension for the imperial is cut off at 20 per cent of his disability.

There are other difficulties under which these men are working. They are not entitled to any veteran's allowance, and I am asking now that they be granted that allowance because they have lived here so long. Furthermore, they are handicapped in their hospitalization. A Canadian is admitted into any veterans hospital across the country, where I believe it is generally accepted that he receives the finest treatment that can be given to him by any hospital service in the land. An imperial veteran cannot be admitted into a Canadian Veterans hospital unless his ailment is directly attributable to his pension disability, and then only can he be admitted on the consent of the British ministry here in Ottawa. Permission has to be obtained for him to be admitted into that hospital, because it is the British government and not the Canadian government which pays for his hospitalization while he is in the veterans hospital.

I should like to ask also that the hospitals under the Department of Veterans Affairs be utilized to the fullest possible extent and that the privilege of entering a hospital be extended to more veterans than it is today. There is what is known as the class 6 type of veteran who may be admitted into a hospital if he has reached a terminal illness and if he has not the means to pay for going into a general hospital in the country.

Can we not allow more veterans who have reached their terminal illness to enter our veterans hospital, so that they may spend their last days with their old comrades, not only those without funds but the man who is quite prepared to pay his own expenses in the veterans hospitals, provided that there are beds available.

I had a sad case brought to my attention this past Christmas. An old veteran, in comfortable means, reached his terminal illness. There was no doubt that his days

were numbered. He applied to be allowed to go into the veterans hospital. The hospital in Victoria was not more than one-third full at that time. But no; because he was not in financial straits, he had to go into another hospital run by a group of well-meaning people of a religious sect whose diet regulations did not allow inmates to smoke or to have any wine or spirits. That old soldier spent his last Christmas on this earth without having a drink or a cigarette. I feel that there is an opportunity to open up the class 6 group, so that any veteran may spend his last days in a veterans hospital.

There are various other points that I should like to have referred to, but I wish to deal with one local question. I want to commend most seriously to the Minister of Veterans Affairs the desirability of reconsidering the treatment which is given to the men of the ferry command, also the men of the veterans guard who served in British Guiana during this war and were not entitled to the same allowances as others. There were also the Red Cross girls and various groups like that. That all needs to be explored. But in the few remaining minutes that I have I wish to refer to a situation which has arisen in my constituency in connection with the Veterans Land Act administration.

In 1946, some twenty-eight houses for veterans were built in what is known as the Braefoot estate, in the county of Saanich, which is outside Victoria. There were the usual conditions. It was not known exactly how much would be charged for those houses. There were the usual delays in getting them built; but eventually the veterans moved in, only to find that conditions were most unsatisfactory. It was found that the houses were in a bad state of repair, that construction work had not been well done, and it appeared that the cost of the houses were greatly in excess of what had been expected. The result was that on December 3, 1946, a meeting was held at which were present local representatives, and representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs. It was suggested that a committee be set up to inquire into the cost of these houses and to submit a report to the government. The then minister of veterans affairs agreed to the setting up of this committee and nominated a gentleman to act as chairman. The legion nominated another man and the citizens rehabilitation committee nominated a third. These men went through the project thoroughly and turned in their report. The final sentence of the report reads in part as follows: . . . and we recommend that the house cost be reduced by twenty per cent throughout the twenty-eight houses.

[Mr. Pearkes.]