

My attention was recently drawn to the fact that the right of participation in the Last Post fund has been withdrawn from the Indians owing to the fact that they are wards of the government. I should like to know why that was done. These men did their bit; when they were asked to go over the top they were not asked whether they were Indians or what they were. They were just British.

Mr. POWER: Representations have been made to the Last Post fund along the lines mentioned by the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Wood). Without being able to be definite on the subject I assume that the reason for some distinction being made between Indians and other ex-soldiers is that, the Indians being wards of the government—

Mr. CAHAN: And already provided for.

Mr. POWER: —and already provided for by the Department of Indian Affairs, the administrators of the Last Post fund did not consider they were indigent. But I know that the Last Post fund has always provided \$25 for a marker, the funeral expenses presumably being looked after by the department which has the special care of the Indians. I may add that recently the matter has been brought to the attention of the department, and discussions are going on with the Department of Indian Affairs.

Mr. McIVOR: I have officiated at funerals at which the type of burial outlined by the minister was quite in evidence. It was a comfort to the wife and family to know that their husband or brother or father having been overseas and his earning ability considerably lessened, and it having been perhaps impossible for him to get any pension, at any rate he did not have to be buried as an indigent. It was a little bit of comfort and perhaps an evidence of appreciation on the part of the government to give at least a funeral of a much lower standard than that of the ordinary artisan.

Mr. BROOKS: My understanding is that it is not the government that gives the funeral; it is the Last Post fund.

Mr. STEWART: I understood the minister to say that this is an organization to which the government makes a contribution, and that these payments are made from the funds of the organization. Could the minister tell the committee what other sources of revenue the organization has besides the contributions from the government, also whether they render a statement of their expenditures to the minister or the department?

Mr. POWER: I am informed that they are not asked for a statement, but I know they have other sources of revenue. In Ontario a grant has been made by the legislature for the past four years to cover the cost of administration, and so forth, and each municipality is required to pay \$15 towards the cost of burial of anyone residing in the municipality for a period of not less than three months who would otherwise have been a public charge. In the cities of Montreal, Westmount, Outremont, Verdun and Lachine, twenty-five per cent of the cost is paid in similar circumstances by the municipality. In Quebec the provincial government has made a special grant for the purchase of the "field of honour" of \$1,000 per annum for ten years from 1928. This is extraneous to and not applicable to current burials. In Manitoba the provincial government makes a grant of \$500 a year applicable to administration. In Alberta \$400 a year for the same purpose is divided between the two branches, north and south. No other branch has any grant so far.

Mr. CAHAN: There are private subscriptions to this fund?

Mr. POWER: Oh, yes.

Mr. HEAPS: Have the government had a statement of receipts and expenditures from the organization?

Mr. POWER: There is a representative of the department on the board, Mr. Scammell, the secretary of the department. We do not receive any statement as far as I know.

Mr. HEAPS: No check is kept of the money that the government gives to this organization?

Mr. POWER: The statement of the fund is audited by chartered accountants, and the representative of the department checks it.

Mr. STEWART: Can the minister give the total expenditures of the organization during the year, without the details?

Mr. POWER: I have no doubt I could readily obtain it from the headquarters of the fund.

Mr. STEWART: It would seem that as the government makes the contribution it might naturally and without any discrimination expect to receive from the organization a copy of its annual statement, or some information as to whether the whole amount is needed, and so on.

Mr. POWER: As far as I am aware this vote has always been considered a very