

Mr. GILLIS: Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: I want it to be quite clear that I could not allow a general discussion on the subject.

Mr. GILLIS: I have a few remarks to make about the treasury board. I should like to inquire from the minister if I should make them under this item, or wait until item 68 is before the committee. Item 68 seems to be specific.

Mr. ILSLEY: I would say, make them now. I do not think item 68 is the one.

The CHAIRMAN: As I tried to explain yesterday, we must stick to the item under consideration. The details of item 47 are set out on page 77. We are in committee of supply, and the only question referred to us is the expediency of granting to his majesty certain sums of money under item 47, the details of which are given on page 77. If we depart from that rule we shall be completely at sea in determining what we should and what we should not do.

Mr. GILLIS: The Minister of Finance is chairman of the treasury board. I corresponded with him in connection with the matter which I desire to bring to his attention. This has to do with the manner in which dependents' allowances are applied to the present armed forces. The case that I have in mind concerns a soldier who is at present serving in England—

The CHAIRMAN: Dependents' allowances cannot be brought up under item 47 by any stretch of the imagination.

Mr. GILLIS: The dependents' allowance is merely part of the discussion. The matter finally went to the treasury board. As I say, I corresponded with the Minister of Finance about the matter. The treasury board has overruled the dependents' allowance board on this question of dependents' allowance. This particular soldier is serving in the old country. He had four of a family, the youngest child being tubercular. The oldest child has been acting as his housekeeper since 1931 and has maintained the home. For the past fifteen months this family has been eking out an existence without a dependents' allowance. After a correspondence lasting about a year the dependents' allowance board decided the case was legitimate. They made an award, but the treasury board disallowed it. The only income of this family at the present time is the assigned pay of the father. I received a letter from the minister setting out the position of the treasury board, and I wrote him again on July 2 but have not received an answer.

Mr. ILSLEY: The hon. gentleman was going to take it up with the dependents' allowance board.

Mr. GILLIS: I did, and I received no reply from the dependents' allowance board, which leads me to believe that the board are a little afraid of maintaining their former position in view of the attitude taken by the treasury board. The minister in his letter to me of July 29 sets out that the boy who was in hospital was receiving an award of \$5 a month to provide comforts, and that his maintenance in hospital was taken care of because his father was a subscriber. But that is a charitable arrangement which the hospital authorities have made with respect to men who enlist in the armed services. There is no contribution from that family to the hospital now, but the hospital has extended ever since the outbreak of the war to those serving in the armed forces the same advantages as are given to men who are now subscribing. So that the boy was really being maintained in hospital mostly by the miners of that section, who to a large extent keep up that hospital. The boy is home at the present time, and he should be receiving the \$12 a month allowance allocated by the dependents' allowance board.

The minister in his letter makes the further observation, with which I agree, that there were two other girls in the family, one eighteen and one nineteen. There was no application for allowance for the two older girls. One was employed as a domestic servant, receiving \$3 a week, and the other as a domestic servant, receiving \$2 a week. The minister makes the observation that they might be making some contribution, but in the light of what they were receiving that was impossible. One of these girls has since left domestic service to take employment in a munitions plant in Ontario, and the other is still eking out an existence on that wage.

What I tried to make clear in my letter to the minister was that the older daughter has been maintaining the home since 1931. The father is in England fighting for democracy. While he is fighting over there for democracy, the roof he left over his head to take care of his tubercular child and the older daughter is being taken from him. All that we expect, and all that that girl expects, and all that the soldier expects, is that the older daughter will receive the \$35 a month allowance and some consideration with respect to the allowance of \$12 a month for the tubercular boy, who is not in a position to take employment and will not be for a great many years. His case is probably hopeless. You can visualize the state of mind of that soldier in England, with his daughter writing to him