

Mr. McINTOSH: Could you also tell the committee whether you have seen any change in the functions of your branch over the past few years? What problems do you run up against now that you have not run up against before, and what problems have you eliminated?

Mr. RIDER: Yes, there is a constant change. Social welfare would die if it did not constantly change. There is a constant change in the provisions relating to social welfare benefits in the provinces. There is a constant change in the field of education, and we have to keep very close to this because of the children who study under the Children of War Dead Act. There is a constant change in the veteran population. We are all growing older and we foresee that in a few years assistance to aging veterans is going to be a prime part of our job. There will not be so many cases applying for the re-establishment credit, or for vocational rehabilitation assistance. It is a question of assisting older veterans to grow old gracefully.

Mr. HERRIDGE: You can help me on that.

Mr. RIDER: Through the utilization of the W.V.A. and the assistance fund we are trying to keep the man in his home community by getting him interested in some activity in his community because we feel he will be happier among the people with whom he has lived all his life than, for example, in one of Dr. Crawford's institutions. We expect this to gain momentum over the next 10 or 15 years.

Mr. FLEMING (*Okanagan-Revelstoke*): May I ask what is the ratio of welfare officers to the number of recipients of the war veterans' allowance?

Mr. RIDER: There are about 83,000 recipients of the war veterans' allowance, and we have about 240 field welfare officers. The case load, if it is looked upon as a case load, is quite a high one because the welfare officer who goes out into his area does not only handle one thing, he must handle all things that come up in that area. However, the war veterans' allowance type case is normally a case which needs a lot of concentration when the veteran has some particular problem at some particular time. He may then go on for a year or two without any particular problem.

Mr. FLEMING (*Okanagan-Revelstoke*): Is the number of allowance recipients that come within the jurisdiction of any one officer too great to permit an officer to perhaps make some spot calls just to see how the veteran is getting along? I am speaking of cases of which the department does not hear and which the welfare officer has no opportunity to follow up on a voluntary basis. Would that be so?

Mr. RIDER: We do not stipulate that this will be done. We know very well that many of our welfare officers do it because of their interest in the recipients and their interest in the job, in an attempt to do a little preventive work. They know best the cases where this is required.

Mr. FLEMING (*Okanagan-Revelstoke*): But perhaps the case load that they carry is too heavy and does not permit a wide practice of this kind. Is that right?

Mr. RIDER: The case load is heavy. We have to consider the amount of travel which the welfare officer has to do. One officer may have a case load of 500 W.V.A. recipients in his area and another one may have only 350. This does not mean a mal-distribution of work; it means that maybe one officer has to travel 18,000 miles a year and another may travel 8,000 miles a year.

Mr. FLEMING (*Okanagan-Revelstoke*): I realize this. What I am endeavouring to arrive at is whether you could say that a single officer is endeavouring to carry more cases now or fewer cases than formerly, and what trend do you see? Do you see the case load increasing, do you have a sufficient increase in welfare officers to be assured that the veteran is having adequate service, or do you feel the situation is satisfactory, is likely to become less satisfactory, or has it been more satisfactory than in the past?