

*Veterans Affairs Committee Report*

South (Mr. Lewis) is not justified. The hon. member may have a grievance against the government but I find this is a bad moment to raise the matter because he will have the opportunity to do so in due time.

Now, I would like to quote citation 88 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms:

(2) All motions referring to the business of the house should be introduced by the Leader of the house.

Consequently, I do not think it proper to deal with the question now.

**Mr. Lewis:** What paragraph did you quote, Mr. Speaker?

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Citation 88, paragraph 4, Beauchesne's fourth edition. We are dealing with the business of the house.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, I only wanted to point out that no question of privilege was involved.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order.

[*English*]

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—SUGGESTED CONSIDERATION OF THIRD REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Marshall.

**Mr. William Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand):** Mr. Speaker, in opening my remarks in this debate may I say I am pleased to see the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Dubé) in his place to hear the observations of members of the opposition and all those who are interested in the welfare of war veterans. I was also pleased to hear him refer to the Woods report which is much in the minds of members of the opposition parties, as it is in the minds of veterans across the country. As the minister reminded us, this committee was established on September 8, 1965, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Mervyn Woods. It produced a most voluminous and comprehensive study. The veterans magazine has this to say about it:

Months in preparation, meticulous in detail and bristling with 149 recommendations the Woods report is hailed as a momentous production.

Mr. Ron MacBeath, past president of the Legion, had this to say:

Every aspect of war disability pensions has been gone into thoroughly. There are 149 specific recommendations for improvements and beneficial changes—

All veterans organizations hailed this report as marking a turning point in government treatment of veterans and their problems. What is bothering everyone is the undue delay in the implementation of the recommendations of the committee. The house has not even been given an opportunity to debate most of these recommendations.

On February 3 the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced that the government was preparing a white paper and would not send the Woods report to the standing committee until the white paper had been published. Well, we are still waiting and we are doubtful now that any action will be taken before the summer recess. The minister has endeavoured to justify the delay that has taken place but we have certain suspicions about what has really been happening. I will come to this later.

While the government has been declining to take action, the cost of living has continued to rise. The cost of the groceries which war pensioners buy for their tables, the rent for the homes in which they live, their bills for heating, lighting and taxation, if they own their own homes, are rising steadily. For others in our society incomes are rising. But the veterans can do nothing about their situation. They are trapped in the stagnation of fixed pension incomes. The income of veterans ranks lower and lower on the totem pole of our society, in a society which seems to determine its classifications in accordance with financial position. The Legion's national magazine looks at the situation this way from the point of view of the war pensioner, especially in relation to housing:

Housing for our senior citizens has depreciated to the point at which the situation can be considered a crisis. This is especially so for those in a fixed income bracket. Having no means of supplementation they find their standards of living rapidly deteriorating by reason of the present economic situation.

Surely the minister can muster compelling arguments before his cabinet colleagues that an interim supplementary pension is in order until the course of action recommended in the Woods report can be implemented. We have gone almost a full year without anything being done, and still there is no glimpse of