

Your Committee examined in detail each of the 148 recommendations of the Woods Committee, and also the proposals contained in the White Paper on Veterans Pensions.

Many of the recommendations did not involve legislative changes, and indeed a number were not controversial, being acceptable to the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Canadian Pension Commission as well as to veterans' spokesmen. In regard to those recommendations on which some differences were noted in testimony, your Committee has suggestions for your consideration.

The Government's White Paper on Veterans Pensions was of great assistance in reducing the work of your Committee. Many of the proposals contained in it were welcomed by spokesmen for all veterans groups. These included the provisions affecting Hong Kong veterans, the clarification of the "benefit of doubt", the proposal to restructure the Veterans' Bureau, and the modification of the Pension Act in respect of legal damages. Your Committee is pleased to endorse these proposals, with some minor changes. These will require new legislation which it is hoped will be introduced in Parliament as soon as possible.

In respect of other areas, on which disagreement was noted, your Committee has a number of suggestions for consideration.

One of the items that recurred throughout our hearing related to the basis for determining the monetary quantum of 100% disability pension. The Woods Report (Recommendation 63) recommended that the pension rate should continue to be related to the earning power of an untrained labourer. Spokesmen for veterans groups alleged that since World War I the pension rate had always been related to the Salary of a Cleaner and Helper in the Public Service and should continue to be. Representations made to the Woods Committee alleged that adjustments to the basic pension rate had actually been made from time to time which had the result of bringing it up to Cleaner and Helper rate.

The Committee was unanimous in expressing the opinion that the pension rate should continue to be related to the earning power of an untrained labourer.

The case for additional pension for those severely disabled or suffering from multiple disabilities was very strong. In particular, some witnesses who appeared before the Committee gave evidence of hardship in their own family living because of the limited income available to them. However, because of the concern for the integrity of the principle of assessing a man's disability on his ability to compete in the untrained labour market, many members of the Committee had difficulty in subscribing to the concept of going beyond 100% in measuring physical disability.

Both the Woods Committee and the White Paper issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs recognized the special and additional requirements of those suffering from severe or multiple disabilities. Accordingly, your Committee recommends that additional payments be made to certain categories of veterans whose eligibility would be determined by regulation, in the categories of multiple or severe disabilities. These additional payments should be paid as a matter of right, and should be on a scale higher than that suggested in the White Paper. The details of your Committee's recommendations are set out under Recommendations 64 and 65.

Your Committee was also concerned about the ceiling of \$3,000 now applying to attendance allowances. No changes have been made in these maximum amounts since 1964. In view of the increasing costs of these services, we recommend that these be reviewed by the Government.