

of disability will be assessed on employability rather than being assessed straight on disability? You are not going to change that principle of determining the disability by his employable possibilities?

The WITNESS: Brigadier Melville will say a word but before he does I might say that the principle of additional assistance to unemployable pensioners is by no means new, because we have had unemployment assistance since 1923. We have had assistance under the War Veterans Allowance Act since 1930. Now, this is really extending that assistance to the higher disability group which has sometimes felt it was discriminated against.

Mr. GILLIS: I am not objecting to that at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Brigadier Melville?

Mr. MELVILLE: To reply to the question raised by Mr. Gillis may I state most emphatically that there is no intention whatsoever of doing anything that will disturb the basis on which a disability pension is awarded. Disability is defined as the loss of the will or power to do the normal physical or mental act. This is the basis upon which the Table of disabilities has been prepared by the commission. That remains in effect and I might add it is brought up to date from time to time as we learn more and as advances are made.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest that it would be much better to hear the arguments or the bases for these changes before we start our questioning.

The CHAIRMAN: I am in the hands of the committee with respect to that. There are two ways in which we might proceed. One is for me to continue asking the officers to lay before you the information on which the department based its recommendations. The other method is for you to ask questions and have the answers produced—or have me tell you that I will get them. I am in the hands of the committee. Would you like to have the representations referred to a moment ago?

Mr. GOODE: As far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, I have another meeting at 12 o'clock but I do serve notice that I want to take some time to study the remarks of the minister and the deputy minister. I do not think that anyone is likely to get the full gist of what is in this until we get the Minutes of Proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not anticipate that this matter will be settled by 12 o'clock.

Mr. GOODE: That is what I wanted you to say.

Mr. PEARKES: There are a couple of questions that I would like to ask arising out of the deputy minister's statement. The first is: if a pensioner receives a supplementary allowance will that in any way affect any other supplementary allowance that he might be receiving? I am thinking of the helplessness allowance for those people who have received assistance from somebody else.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps Mr. Melville will answer.

Mr. MELVILLE: A pensioner who is entitled to receive the helplessness allowance will receive his helplessness allowance independently of the unemployability supplement which might be granted to him on account of unemployability.

I might elaborate there that unemployability itself does not constitute authority for the commission to award a helplessness allowance. The Act says, in order to qualify for helplessness allowance, that a pensioner must be totally disabled, helpless, and in addition in need of attendance.

We have had personal representations from a number of severely disabled pensioners who are unable to get work. The last was a pensioner in Duncan,