

Supply—National Defence

This problem with regard to pensions arises in public administration when a group falls outside the stipulated category and as a result there is considerable unfairness as far as pensions are concerned. This is particularly true in respect of those in the services who are not able to count their wartime service in their pension benefits.

The second problem also has to do with pensions. This is a long standing difficulty, and I know from past inquiries which I have made that consideration has been given to resolving this particular anomaly. I refer to the difficulty of retired military personnel of the rank of warrant officer and above who are not allowed to exceed a pay ceiling in pursuing a civilian occupation with some branch of the government service other than the military; that would be greater than the pay ceiling corresponding to that which they would have received in the equivalent rank. In other words, Mr. Chairman, they are on pension, and upon retirement are successful in finding employment in some branch of the civil service, and regardless of their qualifications—and there are very highly qualified people in the armed forces today, as we know—they must take an arbitrary cut in pay because of this arbitrary regulation.

Both these matters have to do with administrative procedures and I am sure the minister and the department could regularize them if they so desired. Has the minister any comment to make on those two points?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): Mr. Chairman, I agree completely with the first point made by the hon. member and, like him, I deplore the fact that, in the case of some veterans, war service does not count for pension purposes.

That matter is now under consideration. We will make representations to the authorities concerned and we hope to win our case. I do not want to say more at this time. I know that it is a serious problem. I am aware of it and I share the hon. member's views.

With regard to the second question, I must give practically the same answer. An order was issued by the Treasury Board; definite representations have been made in that regard and we are also studying that problem in order to find an adequate and fair solution.

[*English*]

Mr. Dinsdale: Do I conclude from the minister's statement that both these matters are under very active consideration?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): That is the expression I used.

[*English*]

Mr. Dinsdale: Very, very active consideration, I would trust.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether the Associate Minister could say a further word as to what he meant when he said that the first of the matters just raised has been taken up with the appropriate authorities. The minister may or may not recall that I have had correspondence with him about this very matter, and I understood from the correspondence that he at least was sympathetic to making the necessary amendment to the legislation.

Is not the appropriate authority in this matter the cabinet, of which we have two distinguished members before us? Cannot they prevail upon this appropriate authority to take this action, since they now seem to agree with us?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): If the hon. member can recall my letter, I think it told him that I would make a recommendation to my colleagues in the cabinet, but that I could not anticipate the decision that would be taken. That is precisely what I will do: make a recommendation.

[*English*]

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, may I confirm that this is what the Associate Minister said to me in a letter. I just thought it should be clear here that these appropriate authorities were not some mysterious people in some other place but that they are the members of the cabinet.

• (7:20 p.m.)

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, the matter of pensions and their relationship to the individual has been raised. I probably should know something about this question but I must confess that I am always at a loss to understand the relationship between service personnel, the pension board, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the war veterans allowance board. In regard to these bodies I do not know whether there is any relationship with service personnel. The hon. member for Winnipeg North mentioned a television program of the other night which dealt with a case in point. This ruling, I presume, was made since the war and therefore, in my