

what amount is still at the disposal of the Patriotic Fund Committee?

Sir HERBERT AMES: I am most happy to give these figures to the House although they will be in round numbers. The Canadian public have been extremely generous to the Patriotic Fund. We have raised altogether about \$47,250,000, we have expended to date about \$40,000,000, and we have at the present time in hand and collectable—for there are some moneys yet to come in—somewhat over \$7,000,000. We expect to finish our regular legitimate work by the time the troops are discharged, that is by September 1, with about \$6,000,000 in the treasury which will enable us for some time to do supplementary work for the dependents of soldiers. The Pensions Board and the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment cannot meet the necessities of a number of families that are in chronic need, or families that are temporarily in hard luck. We hope in that way to be able to alleviate suffering wherever it occurs in the families of men who have fought for us overseas.

Mr. McKENZIE: Does the organization propose to continue the machinery which it now has in different parts of the country in order to carry on the remainder of the work as it has been carried on during the war?

Sir HERBERT AMES: The machinery for the distribution of relief will be continued and will in some cases have to be strengthened, because our task in dealing with post-war cases will require even more careful investigation than the work that we have been doing, but our machinery for the collecting of money will not be continued as we do not expect to ask the public for any more money.

Mr. JACOBS: Will the hon. gentleman be good enough to tell us how these accounts are audited, whether they are audited officially by the Auditor General or privately?

Sir HERBERT AMES: The Auditor General is the auditor of the fund. The treasurer of the fund is the Finance Minister, and the head office books are nominally kept by him, although they were actually kept by a very able member of his staff, Mr. E. L. Brittain. The Auditor General is our auditor, and he takes such steps from time to time as he sees fit to secure a proper audit at the end of each fiscal year, 30th of March. We ask, in this Bill, that before the Fund can be closed up, a comprehensive audit, satisfactory to the Governor in

Council, shall take place. Then there must be published in the Canada Gazette our intention to close up, together with a statement of this audit, before the Fund can be declared to be officially at an end. I might say that at our principle branches like Montreal and Toronto we have our own auditors; for the Montreal branch, P. S. Ross & Sons, and for the Toronto branch, Price, Waterhouse & Co. Our several large branches also have their own auditors. To our knowledge there has never been a dollar stolen or misappropriated by any official of the Fund.

Mr. KAY: What is the present cost of distributing and managing this Fund?

Sir HERBERT AMES: I might say that the operating expenses of the head office and all its branches—for we have had to have a certain amount of clerical assistance, although the great bulk of the work for the last five years has been done by volunteers—has not exceeded the amount of interest that the banks have paid us on our moneys on deposit, so that we are in position to say to-day that every dollar that has ever been contributed to the Patriotic Fund has either been paid to the soldiers' wives, to the extent of one hundred cents on the dollar, or is in the bank, and the interest earned while the money was lying in the bank has paid all the operating expenses.

Mr. JACOBS: Then the interest has amounted to a very considerable sum?

Sir HERBERT AMES: The interest during the last two years has amounted to a considerable sum. Our expenses all told for the head office and branches ran to about \$25,000 a month.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the amendment carry?

Mr. McKENZIE: We are taking the clause entirely on faith. I do not know what you are repealing, but I presume it is all right.

Sir HERBERT AMES: I will be glad to read the clause that is being repealed. The Patriotic Fund Act was amended in the second year of the war, and in that Act was contained this clause:

The corporation may also during the war and for six months after the termination of the war, assist in case of need incapacitated officers and men—

Then follows the description:

No assistance shall be given to any person under the provisions of this subsection for a longer period than six months, or to any person who is in receipt of any gratuity, pension