

time. Because one came in April and one in July, there was this mix-up.

The point I am making is that sometimes it is handled in a way that is most unfair and sometimes in a way that is fair. Is it not possible for this minister, with the support he has from some of us in this minority government situation, to persuade his colleagues in the cabinet to come up with a device so that it will never happen unfairly again, and that every time there is an increase in old age pensions or any other benefits that get into the pockets of veterans, they will not lose that increase from war veterans allowance?

As far as October is concerned, we are talking about only \$9.02 a month, which is the increase in OAS-GIS combined. However, it is pretty raw for a veteran, if he gets that increase on one hand, to lose it on the other. My feeling about this minister is that he simply will not let that happen, but I ask him to tell us for sure that it is not going to happen. I ask him to tell us tonight that he will take the necessary steps so that it will not happen again either now or at any time in the future.

Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to reply to this question concerning war veterans allowances. When this question was raised previously I assured the House that veterans have not been forgotten. I believe that the record of this government in the field of veterans legislation is very real proof of our concern for our veterans.

With the passage of Bill C-148 in March of this year, we saw a marked improvement in the rates and ceilings of war veterans allowance and civilian war allowances. Since December 31, 1971, we have already increased these rates and ceilings by 24.8 per cent single, 27.8 per cent married and over 24 per cent for orphans. In cases where the husband and wife are both 65 or over, because of the exemptions provided the increase is 32 per cent.

These increases, together with the amendments to the regulations concerning casual earnings which are \$1,000 single and \$1,500 married, the removal of the penalty for having a home valued at over \$10,000, and the provisions for the automatic escalation of the rates and ceilings in accordance with the rise in the consumer price index, represent in all a genuine effort to improve the standard of living for this very worthy group of Canadians.

A unique feature of Bill C-148 was that for the first time in the history of the legislation, limits on personal property were abolished. In June of this year we introduced legislation which, I am proud to say, the House was pleased to pass, increasing disability pensions paid under the Pension Act by 34.2 per cent, or \$100 per month, thus raising the new basic rate to \$4,704.

I am sure I speak for all members when I say Canada is proud of its veterans legislation. This government has every intention of maintaining our record of dealing fairly with veterans and their dependants. The effect of the old age security pension and guaranteed income supplement increases on war veterans allowance is only one of the matters with which we are concerned. Others of equal importance have also been receiving our attention.

Adjournment Debate

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that at the appropriate time measures will be introduced to further improve the War Veterans Allowance Act. Further, in response to the hon. member may I say I am proposing a device which, I hope, will remove the discrepancy about which we have been talking.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Hear, hear!

HEALTH—REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO ALLIANCE FOR LIFE

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, many Canadians are concerned about the rising abortion rate and would like to see the number of abortions decreased. Abortions have nearly quadrupled within three years and now amount to approximately 10 per cent of live births in Canada, as will be seen by the following figures: 1970, live births 371,888, abortions 11,152; 1971, live births 362,187, abortions 30,923; 1972, live births 342,050; abortions 40,000.

These figures not only reflect the cheapening of human life but also contain a warning concerning the future health of the nation. Perhaps most striking is the correlation of the number of induced abortions with the prematurity of subsequent children and thus with the presence in subsequent babies of congenital handicaps. There are also striking increases in perinatal mortality and various sorts of morbidity of the mother.

Alliance for Life is the only effective national organization directly attempting to alleviate this situation. As a non-denominational, pro-life movement it co-ordinates the work of a growing number of local organizations, currently numbering 50, with a membership of over 10,000 ranging from Newfoundland to Inuvik. It is pursuing its goal by creating and distributing audio-visual aids, by providing trained speakers for high school classes, university seminars, church and social groups, by staging public exhibits, for example, at the Canadian National Exhibition, by keeping the theme of respect for life before television, radio, magazines and newspapers, and by generating research.

Last May, Alliance for Life officials came to Parliament Hill. A delegation headed by the renowned gynaecologist, Dr. Heather Morris of Toronto, presented an excellent brief to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and several cabinet ministers. Attached was a petition signed by 350,000 Canadians urging that "abortion legislation be amended in order that full and equal recognition and protection be given to all human life before as well as after birth."

Subsequently, Alliance for Life requested a grant from the federal government to help develop its educational program and to enlarge its ability to communicate with the public. The amount requested was \$587,000, the major portion of which would be spent on a carefully prepared campaign of visual advertisements in magazines and cards inside public transportation. The request was met with a hostile response from the Department of National Health and Welfare. The department advanced the argument that if federal support were given to an organization which was clearly opposed to any liberalization of the law relating to abortion, the government would expose itself to