

Yet the increase in the cost of living bore just as heavily upon the mother as upon anyone else. All the arguments which we advanced at that time to prove that pension rates must be revised to meet the increased cost of living applied with equal force to the pensions for dependent parents, and we cannot understand the persistent discrimination against them. We are disappointed that despite our continuing representations on their behalf no change in pension rates for this group is contemplated. We would reiterate our recommendation that these rates be \$100 a month for a single parent and \$125.00 a month when both parents are dependent.

This situation is worsened by the fact that actually few of the parents receive the maximum award permissible even under present rates. Some rectification has been secured by the legion's efforts but there must be a great many cases where either the legion's services are unknown or the recipients are not aware that anything can be done for them. In any case it would seem to us that there is need for a mandatory provision in the Act which would require the commission to award the maximum permissible less whatever other actual income the applicant has, and we would respectfully suggest that you so recommend. This would not apply to dependent widowed mothers where there is a measure of statutory protection, and earnings plus a permissive \$20 a month are expressly exempt from consideration as income.

There appears to be need for some clear-cut mandatory provision in the Act which will ensure that the applicant will receive the full amount permissible under the law.

As you are aware these awards are made on a basis of need up to a certain maximum stated in the Act itself. Despite the fact that this maximum is in many cases too low, actual awards under the Act are far below that permitted. Attention was called to this fact in a public address at the Ontario convention last August and later in a signed article in *The Legionary*. At that time, as far as we could determine from statistics available, the awards averaged less than 50% of the maximum. There has been, we are glad to say, a notable improvement since then and I believe now the awards average about 66% of the maximum.

Out of our experience in dealing with this class of pensioners we would make the following recommendations:

1. That rates be revised to bring them into line with other groups of pensioners. Our suggestions are \$100 a month for a single parent and \$125 where both parents are alive.
2. Mandatory provisions inserted in the Act which will ensure that the applicant receives the maximum award permissible under the Act. (Less other income)
3. Increases should be effective as from the date of application in order to rectify injustice caused by long delays in processing.

Now to deal with the legislation actually before this committee.

Bill 339—section 2

The Canadian Legion looks upon section 2 of Bill 339 as a serious potential infringement of one of the basic principles of the Canadian Pension Act.

The original, and I think the continuing intention of the Act, was that the Canadian Pension Commission be as independent as parliament can make it. This is as it should be.

After all the whole basis of our veteran and pension legislation rests on the conscience of the Canadian people who express their wishes through you their elected representatives. Parliament guards that trust, and indeed it is for the express purpose of executing the trust that the committee of parliamentary members meet here today.