

know there have been increases in the cost of bacon, beef and other commodities as a result of those contracts. Therefore I cannot help repeating that if I considered the increases inadequate in the middle of December, I have still more right to claim that those increases are inadequate now in the middle of February.

Mind you, this increase of \$10 a month is the increase for a pensioner who has 100 per cent disability. That is a man who is considered incapable of sustaining himself on account of war disabilities he has suffered. That scale decreases according to the lesser disability which he may suffer. Men with the loss of limbs do not get 100 per cent disability, although they are severely handicapped in their struggle for existence. Many of these men who are in the higher brackets of disability, although they have not reached 100 per cent disability, are finding it exceedingly difficult to find employment, and are relying more and more upon the pension which they receive, even though it is not 100 per cent.

This \$10 increase a month made in December—a Christmas present? no—has not yet been paid to the men. We do not know when they will receive it. It is true that they are to have it made retroactive to October 1, but we are now in the middle of winter. The men are in urgent need of receiving assistance now. This \$10 would have been most useful during these hard winter months. Oh, we are told that it cannot be done; that we shall have to wait until amendments are made to the legislation; that bills will have to be brought down and considered and perhaps even referred to some committee which has not yet been set up. When this government is in need of money or is anxious to stop spending, or is anxious perhaps to increase the cost of living it has no difficulty whatever in putting on taxes overnight. Only last fall we had the unheard of thing of the Abbott austerity program being introduced by a radio budget, put into effect overnight. I cannot believe that there is not some government machinery which can be found in order to give veterans their increase now, instead of their having to wait perhaps until late spring or next summer.

I want to suggest to the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Gregg), when he starts considering this problem that in regard to those men who are unemployable, although they may be receiving 100 per cent disability or not, either case, who cannot get a job on account of a disability that they have suffered, some supplementary unemployable increase should be made. I do not know what to call it; an unemployable supplement I should

[Mr. Pearkes.]

think would be a good term. All these men are not eligible for the war veteran's allowance. A man may be a pensioner and he may also draw the war veteran's allowance if he is over a certain age; but many of the men who are unemployable because of war disabilities are not entitled, because of their age or for other reasons, to the war veteran's allowance. Therefore I suggest that careful consideration should be given to an unemployable supplement to the pensions.

Another point which I should like to mention while I am on the question of pension is the inordinate delay that there is between the time the man applies for a pension and the time his first pension cheque arrives. Months invariably elapse. I do not think I should be exaggerating in the least to say that a minimum of three months usually elapses, and these are three very difficult months. I believe the machinery of the department could be speeded up, so that as soon as a veteran has been passed by the pension commission he should be able, the very next month, to receive the pension cheque to which he is entitled.

I have been speaking regarding the veterans. There are also the families of the veterans; perhaps the widows and children of deceased veterans, and they are in a very similar position to the position I have outlined regarding the veterans who are in receipt of pension. If a man has given his life for his country, surely the least that the country can do is to accept the wardship of his children. I commend most seriously to the Minister of Veterans Affairs to consider increases in the pensions which are awarded to widows and the allowances which are provided for the children. I would suggest that he should not stop at anything short of the same pension, which is awarded to a 100 per cent disability case, to a widow who has children, during the period that those children are receiving their education. If not, I feel that the child's allowances should at least be double the allowance it receives at the present time.

I wish to refer to another class, namely, those veterans who are in receipt of the war veterans' allowance, sometimes referred to as the burnt-out pension. That allowance was \$30 a month and, according to the Prime Minister's statement, it is to be increased to \$40 a month, or it may be increased to \$40 a month, provided that the war veteran's allowances board considers that the veteran is needy. I suggest that that is nothing more than an extension of the means test, because surely it must be realized that every veteran who draws the war veteran's allowance has received a thorough and searching examination