

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I would like, Commander, to tell all of you that we have a wonderful committee, that there has never been any kind of partisan politics in our committee, that we work together. We are all interested in the good of veterans and the good of this country. I certainly believe in our political system of two parties, but I think as far as veterans are concerned it is much better that it never becomes a political issue. [Applause.]

We have an excellent staff of our committee, as I am sure Chet Huber will tell you. I would like for all of them who are here to stand, please. [Applause.]

I would like to give you a very quick report on our committee. I would say first it is going to be a very busy committee this year. The leadership of the House, the chairmen of all the committees have met and everyone has agreed we would be through with our business by the 1st of August. That is some number of months away, but legislatively speaking it is not very far away.

I would like very much to wait for a report from the Veterans' Advisory Commission before we take action on compensation, but I do not intend to wait until we do not have a chance to pass a bill. We are going to wait a while. If we can get their report—and as far as I know the Commission has done an excellent job of going into the problems of veterans' affairs—right now they are sifting through all the hearings they have had and they are trying to come to agreement on priorities. If it were not for money, I could be for everything you recommend in your speech. We do have to consider money. We do have to set priorities. It is a tough job for this committee to set priorities on what we should pass. With the number of veterans we have today, everything we do costs a large amount of money.

Just this little thing last year of trying to take care of pensions and social security ran over \$100 million. Nearly everything we do costs money.

We are going to do something on housing. We are going to do something on the cemeteries. But more important than anything, we are going to pass this compensation bill. [Applause.]

But Claude, I hope you and your commission will start working around the clock to get your business together and get a report to us because we would like to have it. We are not going to wait too long on your report. We will wait as long as we can but not too long.

Mr. CALLEGARY (Mr. Claude L. Callegary, former national commander). Mr. Chairman, we are sitting around the clock now.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, there has been some talk of our veterans' organizations giving a year's honorary membership to men returning from service today. Has DAV considered that or is it taking any action on it?

Mr. BEATON. We have a study group fully considering it at this time.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I think, personally, it is an excellent idea.

Mr. BEATON. As a matter of fact, we are ready to act immediately on the subject.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Good.

One other question I would like to ask you: As I understand it, today the wife of a retired officer is entitled to go into military hos-