

MISCELLANEOUS

Continuation of benefits to widows who remarry after age 60. Estimated first-year cost will be \$40 million.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Who remarry after age 60?

Mr. McCURDY. Who remarry after age 60.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Did you consider other aspects of this—for example, of stopping her pension while she is remarried and then if the marriage is terminated—

Mr. McCURDY. We think that benefits should be restored at any age, if the second marriage is terminated.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. How did you arrive at this remarriage after age 60? Why not age 50, 40, 30?

Mr. McCURDY. At age 60—I suppose it was from the personal experience of some of our members, especially Mel Dixon, and I will use Mel because he is not here to defend himself this morning.

But he lives in Florida and they have a lot of these old folks down there, and because she is going to lose her little pension if she gets married, they just won't get married. Mel says they should.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Well, I agree with that. I think surely we can start younger than 60.

Mr. McCURDY. That may be an arbitrary age. I don't think we had prolonged discussion on at what age this should take place. I think it was the unanimous thought of the Commission that 60 was a good age to say that she has her pension and if she is lucky enough to catch another man, we ought not to take her pension away.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Surely that \$40 million figure is a higher one.

Mr. McCURDY. It seemed so to me, but I am assured by VA that it is not. I questioned it too, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Go right ahead.

Mr. McCURDY. Recoupment of severance pay. These items represent the first priorities of this Commission. It is very difficult to do this.

Each person has his own list of priorities. It is especially difficult because of the keen interest of groups of veterans in each item and recommendation in our report.

Each member of the Commission—and we had nearly perfect attendance—not only took part in the hearings but had many exchanges with veterans outside the formal sessions. All of these are reflected in our recommendations.

I cannot close without complimenting the technical consultants named by the various service organizations. Their individual comments and prepared position papers were of great value and were very useful to the members of the Commission.

The local members of the various posts and chapters of the several veterans organizations can be proud of their technical staffs. And in closing I again wish to thank the chairman and members of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for their interest and courtesy.

We know that our report will be of great interest to the veterans of this country. We hope it will be valuable to you in your deliberations.

I and the members of the Commission are available to answer questions.