

at each regional meeting. Individuals and groups submitted comprehensive reviews of material germane to the Commission's program. National organizations were encouraged to summarize their recommendations at the two meetings in Washington, D. C. Veterans' organizations were also asked to nominate members to act as technical consultants to the Commission. These consultants worked with the Commission and its staff in developing programs recommendations.

The Commission also directed a series of staff studies as a result of information received during the hearings or from the submitted statements and reviews. These studies have provided the Commission with additional information on which to base final recommendations.

Conclusions

In assessing existing veterans programs, the Commission has reached the unanimous conclusion that on the whole America's tax dollars applied to veterans programs are being wisely spent and that the existing veterans benefits programs are highly effective.

The Commission has found a few areas in which programs have outlived their usefulness. In most instances, public servants, mindful of these conditions, have either taken the initiative in uncovering them or have readily accepted the challenge of change in their desire to obtain the maximum of useful and productive benefits from each tax dollar spent. The Commission is satisfied that the tax dollars made available for the veterans programs have been wisely appropriated by the Congress and responsibly expended by the government.

The amount expended for veterans benefits has constituted a small and declining portion of all Federal expenditures and a smaller ratio to Gross National Product. The actual cost of veterans programs is expected to increase slowly to the end of the century, but this cost should continue to decline in proportion to the total national production and total Federal expenditures.

Expenditures for veterans benefits reached a high with World War II readjustment programs. In 1950, the cost of veterans programs was nearly one-fourth of all Federal expenditures. At present, however, it is less than four percent of the Federal budget and less than one percent in ratio to the Gross National Product. The estimated expenditures in the 1969 budget are \$7.3 billion which is still less than four percent of the Federal budget and still less than one percent of the Gross National Product.