

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT  
GENERAL COMMITTEES

Public Bill Committee

## VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSIONS COMMITTEES BILL

*Wednesday 15 March 2023*

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CLAUSES 1 to 3 agreed to.  
Bill to be reported, without amendment.

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**Sunday 19 March 2023**

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:***Chair:* JAMES GRAY

Antoniazzi, Tonia (*Gower*) (Lab)  
 † Bacon, Gareth (*Orpington*) (Con)  
 † Bell, Aaron (*Newcastle-under-Lyme*) (Con)  
 † Butler, Rob (*Aylesbury*) (Con)  
 † Clarkson, Chris (*Heywood and Middleton*) (Con)  
 † Davies-Jones, Alex (*Pontypridd*) (Lab)  
 Donaldson, Sir Jeffrey M. (*Lagan Valley*) (DUP)  
 † French, Mr Louie (*Old Bexley and Sidcup*) (Con)  
 † Hopkins, Rachel (*Luton South*) (Lab)  
 † Jones, Mr Kevan (*North Durham*) (Lab)  
 † Levy, Ian (*Blyth Valley*) (Con)

† Millar, Robin (*Aberconwy*) (Con)  
 † Murrison, Dr Andrew (*Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families*)  
 † Pollard, Luke (*Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport*) (Lab/Co-op)  
 † Smith, Greg (*Buckingham*) (Con)  
 † Sunderland, James (*Bracknell*) (Con)  
 † Thompson, Owen (*Midlothian*) (SNP)

Chloe Freeman, Sarah Thatcher, *Committee Clerks*

† **attended the Committee**

# Public Bill Committee

Wednesday 15 March 2023

[JAMES GRAY *in the Chair*]

## Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees Bill

9.25 am

**The Chair:** I welcome Committee members to this line-by-line consideration of the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees Bill, promoted by the hon. Member for Aberconwy. The order of batting is on the selection list in front of you. For clarity, I intend to call the amendments tabled by the hon. Member for Midlothian as one group and then move on to the stand part consideration of the clauses, which will be rather like a Second Reading debate.

### Clause 1

#### VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSIONS COMMITTEES

**Owen Thompson** (Midlothian) (SNP): I beg to move amendment 2, in clause 1, page 1, line 14, at end insert—

“(2A) The regulations must provide for the membership of committees to include at least one representative of a UK veterans’ association.”.

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to discuss the following:

Amendment 1, in clause 1, page 2, line 3, at end insert—

“(3A) The regulations may give the committees functions relating to—  
(a) monitoring and holding to account Veterans UK in the discharge of its functions; and  
(b) oversight and review of decisions made by Veterans UK.”.

Amendment 4, in clause 1, page 2, line 5, at end insert—

“(4A) The regulations must specify that the committees’ functions apply to British Armed Forces veterans who are resident overseas.”.

Amendment 3, in clause 1, page 2, line 21, after “education” insert “social care, employment, immigration”.

**Owen Thompson:** I do not intend to detain Members overly long. In moving the amendments, I am perhaps chancing my arm. They are not in any way meant to take anything away from the Bill, which is a very good Bill. I commend the hon. Member for Aberconwy for the work he has done to get it to this stage, and I look forward to its progressing further, hopefully with the support of all Members. However, I could not let such an opportunity pass without once again making efforts to try to address some of the issues that have arisen with Veterans UK over several years. For the record, I draw the Committee’s attention to the fact that I am a vice convener of the all-party parliamentary group for veterans, and we have undertaken a fair bit of work looking at the experiences of veterans with Veterans UK.

My intention is not to detract from the Bill, which does a lot of very good things and moves very much in the right direction. It raises awareness of vital services that are available to veterans, but there is an opportunity to do just that bit more.

There is an opportunity here for us to reshape the relationship between veterans advisory and pensions committees—VAPCs—and the Office for Veterans’ Affairs, giving that office the formal task, on a statutory footing, of holding Veterans UK to account, and providing a kind of ombudsman service. That is the purpose of amendment 1. At the moment—we have heard this from a number of Members in debates—Veterans UK, to a large extent, is judge and jury when it comes to deciding outcomes. The Bill could provide a potential mechanism for a third party to oversee those processes. I do not think that that asks too much in addition from the Bill.

Amendment 2 seeks to make provision about the membership of VAPCs. To my mind, it is a relatively straightforward proposal. Those who are part of veterans associations know our veterans better than anyone, so formally ensuring their inclusion in VAPCs is a sensible proposal. They may well be on those committees anyway, but let us just make sure that they form part of them.

On amendment 4, I have one particular question for the Minister. It was unclear from my reading of the Bill whether it covers any of our veterans who now live overseas. Amendment 4 seeks to make it absolutely clear that it does, because I do not feel that that clarity is there at the moment. I may have missed it—if I have, I welcome that. However, let us just be clear and make sure that all veterans can access the support that is available.

**Luke Pollard** (Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport) (Lab/Co-op): Some clarity on both the territorial extent of the Bill and veterans living overseas would be helpful, including the Bill’s application to veterans living in overseas territories and Crown dependencies, as they sometimes sit in a different category from veterans living overseas. Does the hon. Member agree?

**Owen Thompson:** I absolutely agree. It is simply a matter of clarity. I do not think there is any intention to exclude anyone here, and I am not trying to suggest that there is. We need some clarity around that, to be sure.

Finally, on amendment 3, the Bill refers to covenant matters in relation to housing, education and health, but those are not the only things our veterans need help and support with. I hope that the measure might be expanded to include social care, employment, immigration and that sort of thing. I do not think it would be unnecessarily complicated to add those to the Bill, and I look forward to hearing the thoughts of the hon. Member for Aberconwy and the Minister on the proposals.

I am not here to detain anyone for longer than is necessary, and this is a good opportunity for us to continue the work that is clearly under way better to support our veterans. After all, they have given so much to support the nations of these isles, so it is not too much to ask that we do everything we can to support them, particularly when they need it most.

**Robin Millar** (Aberconwy) (Con): It is an honour to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray, and I thank the hon. Member for Midlothian, whose work in this

place on behalf of veterans I acknowledge. I recognise the points the hon. Gentleman has made, which came up frequently in discussions I have had about the Bill. They represent legitimate concerns.

The amendments would widen the scope of the committees in relation to their interaction with Veterans UK, the VAPC membership and territorial extent, and, effectively, add social care, employment and immigration to the definition of the armed forces covenant. The intention of my Bill is to recognise how committees have operated in practice in recent years and enable them to carry out additional functions in relation to other aspects of the services provided to veterans and their families by the Ministry of Defence. However, those are subtle but important distinctions.

Amendment 2 would prescribe that the regulations that establish the VAPCs provide that there must be at least one committee member who is a representative of a UK veterans association. There is no question about the importance of the relationship between VAPCs and the UK veterans associations at local, regional and national levels. However, those committee members will be appointed by the Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families following an open and fair competition that involves the civil service appointment process. Representatives of UK veterans associations are therefore welcome to apply for membership of the committees through that process.

The wording of clause 1 allows flexibility in how the regulations are framed, including in relation to the composition of committee memberships, precisely because different compositions might be appropriate across the different regional committees. The amendment is well intentioned, but it would start to encroach on how the committees are constituted, which would prevent the very flexibility that the Bill aims to afford, and which is necessary for VAPCs to operate differently across different regions.

Amendment 1 would give VAPCs functions in relation to holding the Ministry of Defence's Veterans UK service to account in the discharge of its functions, and give oversight and review of decisions made by Veterans UK. Again, I recognise those points from comments made by Members, veterans groups and veterans themselves in the weeks and months leading up to these debates, and the hon. Member for Midlothian is right to raise them. However, in addressing the amendment, it is useful to consider the recent all-party parliamentary group on veterans survey. Many issues raised by the veterans who responded related specifically to the armed forces compensation scheme, which is subject to quinquennial review. That review is due to report fully in the spring.

We must also look to the future. I am mindful of the fact that the Ministry of Defence and the Office for Veterans' Affairs have commissioned a review of Government welfare provision for veterans, which includes services provided by the Ministry of Defence under the banner of Veterans UK. VAPCs will be within scope of that wider Government veterans review, which will be led by a senior civil servant, with the independent veterans' adviser and other key stakeholders providing advice. The review will last approximately three months. A copy of the review and the Government's response will be placed in the Library of the House.

The Bill will give the Secretary of State the powers to make changes that he—or she, if it is she by then—considers necessary based on recommendations deriving from those reviews and surveys. Without knowing the outcome of those reviews or any forthcoming recommendations they might make, it is difficult to see how the amendment, which would provide VAPCs with a function to review Veterans UK, could operate in practice.

Amendment 4 prescribes that regulations must specify that the committees' functions apply to British armed forces veterans who are resident overseas. That point was, again, well made by the hon. Member for Midlothian and echoed by the hon. Member for Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport. However, the additional functions that my Bill gives to VAPCs relate to MOD services and armed forces covenant matters relating to veterans and their families. Therefore, the Bill specifically relates to services provided by the MOD to veterans and their families within the UK.

The Armed Forces Act 2021, which introduced the armed forces covenant duty, sets out that the focus of covenant legislation is access to UK-based public services and is therefore not applicable to those living overseas. The legislation refers to those

“ordinarily resident in the UK”.

Therefore, armed forces covenant matters, as defined in this Bill, must apply only within the UK.

Veterans who live overseas and are having issues with accessing public services in the countries they are resident in will find that those are best raised with the relevant UK embassy or high commission, which can advocate locally on behalf of the veteran. Again, that may be something worth raising with the Minister on another occasion.

Amendment 3 changes the definition of “armed forces covenant matters” to include issues relating to social care, employment and immigration. The definition of “armed forces covenant matters” in this Bill derives from the Armed Forces Act 2006 provisions on the armed forces covenant. When the Armed Forces Act 2021, which introduced the covenant duty, passed through the other place last year, it defined the duty as focusing on the three core functions of healthcare, education and housing. That reflects those already in statute, which are the most commonly raised areas and are where variation of service delivery across localities can inadvertently disadvantage the armed forces community, including the veterans and their families who are the focus of this Bill.

Again, the hon. Member for Midlothian has made a point worth raising. However, areas of concern relating to the armed forces covenant can be addressed as and when they arise, through the powers introduced in the Armed Forces Act 2021, which allow the Government to widen the scope of the covenant duty, subject to consultation or where there is evidence and support to suggest it would be beneficial, through secondary legislation. That is the process by which any amendments to the armed forces covenant duty might be made—not through this Bill.

The hon. Member may be aware that the Government have committed to reviewing the operation of the covenant duty during 2023. The review will encompass the operation of the new duty across the UK and will consider whether it would be beneficial to exercise any of the

[Robin Millar]

powers conferred by the 2021 Act to add to its scope. That will include specific consideration of whether central Government and the devolved Administrations could usefully be added. The Government will report on that review as part of their covenant annual report in 2023.

I hope that, following those assurances, the hon. Member for Midlothian will agree not to press his amendments.

**The Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families (Dr Andrew Murrison):** What a pleasure it is to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray. I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Aberconwy for his remarks, and the hon. Member for Midlothian for his amendments, which are thoughtful. I rise, really, just to support my hon. Friend's response to those amendments, and I urge the Committee to politely reject them. My hon. Friend has laid out the reasons for that elegantly.

Regarding amendment 2, I must say that I would prefer to have the flexibility in appointing Members of VAPCs. During my time as a Minister, I have seen how that process works. It is robust and credible, and, looking at the people who populate VAPCs—all 12 of them—it seems to me that the veteran community is heavily represented. They are the sort of people who are likely to be drawn to that job, so I think, perhaps, the practicality of it is that the voice of veterans is already loud and clear. Indeed, I would say that the value of VAPCs is very much that they are rooted in the veteran community.

On amendment 1, the mechanism cited is certainly worthy of consideration, but, again, I urge the Committee to resist the function the amendment proposes. This is quite a robust piece of legislation, which has its origin in amendments tabled in the Lords in response to the Armed Forces Act 2021. For that I am grateful to my noble Friend Lord Lancaster, whose amendments at that juncture were rejected by the Government on the promise that we would facilitate a Bill of this sort. Many of the concerns expressed by the hon. Member for Midlothian were addressed at that time, so I would resist amendments 1 and 2.

Amendment 4 states:

“The regulations must specify that the committees' functions apply to British Armed Forces veterans who are resident overseas.” I understand it and I get it, but the 2021 Act talks about people who are

“ordinarily resident in the UK”,

and for rather boring technical reasons it would be very difficult indeed to extend that to veterans who live overseas. I am sorry that that is slightly unsatisfactory, but I am confident that VAPCs will cover much of the ground and material that would be germane to people serving overseas.

**Mr Kevan Jones (North Durham) (Lab):** I see the logic of the Minister's argument, but can he clarify the pensions issue? Can the many veterans who retire to live abroad still raise issues with the pensions advisory board?

**Dr Murrison:** That is an interesting point. Like me, the right hon. Gentleman will get correspondence all the time from people who live overseas. I do not know what his practice is, but mine is to engage with their

inquiries and where it is clear that people have a strong connection with my area or have lived there for a reasonable period, I take those up on their behalf. I will not lay down here that VAPCs should do so, but it is more than likely that those issues would be covered in any event. I hope that is a comfort to the right hon. Gentleman.

I thank the hon. Member for Midlothian for tabling the amendments and I particularly thank my hon. Friend the Member for Aberconwy for addressing them. I hope the hon. Member for Midlothian is content.

**Owen Thompson:** I will not press any amendments to a vote today, but it was important to flag the issues. If we cannot amend this Bill, can we find a mechanism to facilitate some of the things that we were trying to achieve here? It is not about putting in place a wrecking mechanism; this is all about putting in extra support. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

*Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.*

*Question proposed,* That the clause stand part of the Bill.

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to discuss clauses 2 and 3 stand part.

**Robin Millar:** I am grateful for the support from you, Mr Gray, and all members of the Committee, as well as from Members who could not be here, but who supported the Bill on Second Reading. It has enjoyed cross-party support, and support from Members of both Houses.

The veterans advisory and pensions committees have been a less well-known part of Government support for veterans for almost a century. Formerly known as the war pensions committees, they advise and liaise with veterans, their families and relevant organisations on their needs, issues and concerns. There are 12 VAPCs across the UK, and they are distinctive, identifiable and independent points of reference for veterans. They are staffed by volunteers. It has been a real privilege for me to meet current and former volunteers while preparing this Bill.

This reform has the potential to improve life for veterans. First, the VAPCs lack a clearly defined remit. As a result, relationships with stakeholders can be frustrated. Secondly, the monitoring of and advising on the war pensions and armed forces compensation schemes is an important but limited function. There is a much broader range of support now available to veterans, and a real opportunity to make a difference by linking and co-ordinating Ministry of Defence services for individuals. Broadening the role of the VAPCs enables the committees to better identify gaps in provision and co-ordinate MOD services for veterans.

Thirdly, the Bill will widen the cohort of veterans and families who are able to access support from the VAPCs. Currently, only those in receipt of war pensions and help from the armed forces compensation scheme are guaranteed help from VAPCs. That hinders the committees' ability to provide the broad range of social support that families and ex-service people often need. It also limits their ability to communicate with the wider service community, and so to advocate for veterans and provide representative feedback. Technically, the Bill will achieve that in three ways.

9.45 am

First, we are moving the statutory power establishing the advisory committees into the Armed Forces Act 2006, which is fitting, given the subject matter of the Bill. That, secondly, will allow the Secretary of State greater flexibility to amend the functions of the committees over time, so that they can best serve the needs of veterans and their families. For example, they could be amended in response to the quinquennial review. Finally, the Bill expands the scope of the VAPCs' role and responsibilities. By expanding the remit of advisory committees to all veterans and their families, regardless of length of service and compensation entitlement, the Bill will both strengthen support services and provide all veterans with a clear means of having their voice heard in Government. I accept that the Bill is quite technical and dry, but it will have an impact on veterans and their families, who may rely on it.

I turn to the specifics of the Bill. Its primary purpose is to modernise and bring the VAPC statutory framework into Ministry of Defence legislation. It will also enable VAPCs to carry out additional functions in relation to veterans' issues; that will bring their statutory functions into line with how they have operated in practice in recent years. Clause 1 creates an enabling power in the Armed Forces Act 2006 through which the Secretary of State can make regulations to establish VAPCs for specified areas. Those regulations can make provision about the membership of VAPCs, and can confer statutory functions on the VAPCs relating to eight topics. Those include the four existing functions—war pensions, war pensioners, the armed forces compensation scheme and recipients of AFCS benefits. The four additional functions on VAPCs relate to former members of the armed forces; their families; the services that the MOD provides to those former members and their families; and matters relating to the armed forces covenant. In order to future-proof the legislation, the Secretary of State can set out in the regulations how the VAPCs will perform their functions. The regulations will be made under the negative procedure.

It is necessary to repeal section 25 of the Social Security Act 1989, as it is being replaced by a new enabling power in the Armed Forces Act 2006. Clause 2 provides for the repeal of section 25 of the 1989 Act. In total, the Bill amends 11 Acts. Clause 2 provides for consequential amendments to those Acts to ensure that they refer to the correct statute. The clause sets out that the Secretary of State has the power to make consequential amendments to secondary legislation, which may be required as a result of the Bill. It also clarifies that regulations under clause 2 can be made under the negative procedure. That means that the regulations will be made and then laid before the House, rather than being laid before the House in draft. That is appropriate and proportionate, given that the subject matter of the regulations is not controversial.

Clause 3(1) confirms that the Bill extends to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Subsection (2) confirms that amendments or repeals made under clause 2 have the same extent as the provision that has been amended, repealed or revoked. Clause 3(3) sets out when and how the provisions of the Bill will come into force. Clauses 1 and 2(1) will be brought into force by commencement regulations, and clause 2(2) will be brought into force on Royal Assent.

Clause 3 sets out the power to make transitional and savings provisions by regulation as required. Transitional provisions may be necessary for practical reasons when migrating from the old regulations to the new. The clause also confirms that the short title will be the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee Act 2023.

**Luke Pollard:** I welcome the Bill that the hon. Member for Aberconwy is seeking to introduce; it seems perfectly sensible. However, I have a few questions for the Minister.

In the very useful impact assessment to the Bill, section D on risks assumptions and limitations states that the MOD

“has yet to complete its own review of the VAPCs.”

It says that there is a risk that future legislation will be required if that review is not completed before this legislation is taken forward. I would be grateful if the Minister could set out whether the review has been completed, so that we can be sure that we are not risking a requirement for additional legislation. On a point about language, section D also states:

“There is a risk that the widened cohort of veterans in scope will increase the number of personnel receiving support from the VAPCs under option 3”,

which was the one mentioned by the hon. Member for Aberconwy. I think that is not so much a risk resulting from the legislation as its intention, so that is interesting language to use.

May I ask the Minister about the terms of reference for VAPCs? From various explanatory notes, it seems that the last terms of reference were issued by the Office for Veterans' Affairs, yet the explanatory notes to the Bill suggest that the Ministry of Defence will now issue them. I would be grateful if the Minister would clarify whether it is the OVA or the Ministry of Defence issuing the terms of reference from now on.

Finally, I had a look on the VAPC website to see what is going on, and I would like to praise all the volunteers for their work. There are many minutes on the website, and the number of issues considered in them shows that there are some incredible volunteers working their socks off, but I encourage the Minister to ask his officials to update the website a wee bit. Some regions, such as Yorkshire and Humber, seem incredibly active and are very efficient at getting their minutes posted on the website. Other VAPC regions are, I am sure, meeting and writing minutes, but those minutes do not seem to be as prominent on the VAPC website.

Another question is how people can contact members of VAPC regional committees. There are frequent lists of names of those whom the Secretary of State has appointed to the VAPCs, but there is not any obvious way for people to contact them. If the intention is not for people to contact the regional chair, but to make contact via a different method, it would be helpful to say what that method is when listing the members of a committee that people are being encouraged to contact. Other than that, this looks like a sensible piece of legislation.

**Dr Murrison:** This Bill is intended to regularise what has become custom and practice. There is nothing particularly new here, but the Bill does give VAPCs, which we have decided are worthwhile, a statutory basis. I hope the Bill will be seen in that light.

[Dr Murrison]

Under this legislation, VAPCs would have a statutory remit to do more than engage locally with recipients of war pensions or the armed forces compensation scheme. They will cover a broader range of issues; they may, for example, gauge veterans' views on the support they receive from the Veterans Welfare Service, and raising awareness of the armed forces covenant. I hope the Committee will accept that the Government's intent, through the legislation and the various reviews under way, is to ensure that the interests of veterans are furthered. That Government are sensitive to their concerns about how they are dealt with under the armed forces covenant.

The VAPCs will provide the Ministry of Defence and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs with a source of independent advice about how the MOD should support veterans and their families. Families are very important in this. One of the changes that the legislation will certainly bring is a focus not just on war pensioners and recipients of benefits under the armed forces compensation scheme but families and the wider defence community. I should highlight that the Bill also allows for recommendations to be adopted from the ongoing independent review of the VAPCs under the Cabinet Office public bodies reform programme, which is due to report at the end of this month, and from the recently announced independent review of the role and scope of the Government's welfare provision for veterans, including by the MOD under the Veterans UK banner.

I take the point made by the hon. Member for Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport, which reflected the perfectly understandable concern that there is a lot going on at the moment, and that there is a risk of overlap. I hope that the timeline that I have given, and the fact that this is enabling legislation—further regulations would have to be made as statutory instruments—mean that, in reality, the whole thing is pretty much covered off. Of course, rather than running these things in parallel, we could have run them in series, but I am persuaded that we need to crack on with this issue, and I do not necessarily want one to follow the other.

**James Sunderland** (Bracknell) (Con): I am grateful to the Minister for giving way and to Mr Gray for allowing an intervention—I am conscious of falling foul of the tube strike this morning. Having chaired the Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill, I have taken a huge interest in the Bill introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for Aberconwy, and I commend him on bringing it forward, because it covers the things that we did not quite get to in that Committee. Does the Minister agree that what is exciting about the Bill is not the statutory change itself, but the opportunities now

available to the VAPCs? The Bill is about giving them some teeth, and perhaps also holding Veterans UK to account.

**Dr Murrison:** Yes, and that was the subject of one of the amendments that we discussed earlier. The Bill will give the committees teeth—that is the intent—so it will make the veterans' voice louder in this domain.

The hon. Member for Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport rightly made the point about terms of reference. VAPCs will sit within the Ministry of Defence's remit, so the terms of reference will rest with the MOD rather than the Office for Veterans' Affairs. He also made a point about websites, which had not struck me, but I am sure that VAPCs will have heard what he said. I do not want to mandate how they do their business, and there is a balance to be struck between their independence and what the MOD would like. I have a natural instinct towards regularising stuff, but in this instance it is important to give them a little wriggle room to do their comms piece as they see fit. The hon. Member's point is well made, and I hope that those who are perhaps doing less well will have heard what he said.

Mr Gray, you will be delighted to hear that I have taken a red pen to a lot of my speech, because having sensed that the Committee is broadly content with the Bill, I do not see any point in dragging out the Committee, but I want to make a quick comment about the devolved Administrations. The committees will work closely, as they do now, with the devolved Administrations, and as they become aware of issues, they can raise them with Ministers. Ministers can then direct their officials, as they do now, to work with their devolved counterparts on the issues and find a workable solution. My general experience of working with the devolved Administrations in the area for which I am responsible has been positive.

I conclude by thanking my hon. Friend the Member for Aberconwy for his hard work on the Bill, for which I am extremely grateful, and the enthusiasm with which he has approached the task. The Bill has our wholehearted support, and I commend it to the Committee.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 1 accordingly ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clauses 2 and 3 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**The Chair:** Before I put the final Question, I note, with great personal satisfaction, that some two thirds of the members of the Committee are graduates of the armed forces parliamentary scheme, which shows the work of the scheme.

*Bill to be reported, without amendment.*

9.58 am

*Committee rose.*