

The principle which was involved in both the 1936 and 1938 amendments was that certain veterans who had not reached the age of 60 and were not totally and permanently unemployable might be considered to be no longer able to provide for their maintenance, by reason of a combination of advancing years, disabilities and industrial handicaps. The ex-service personnel eligible for the allowance must have served in a theatre of actual war or, if not, they must have been adjudged pensionable.

The importance of this legislation is evidenced by the fact that, on March 31, 1939, the number of veterans in receipt of war veterans' allowance was 20,010. This subsequently increased to a peak of 24,360, involving an annual expenditure of more than \$10,000,000.

From another standpoint, however, it is significant that this 20,000 to 24,000 represents a very small percentage indeed of the more than 600,000 who served.

#### *Unemployment among veterans.*

The War Veterans' Allowance Act is only one of numbers of measures which various governments found it necessary to adopt during the period between the two wars for the purpose of dealing with unemployment and hardship among veterans.

As early as the end of 1919 it was found that many thousands of veterans had not been successfully re-established and during the winter of 1919-20 it was found necessary to institute a measure of unemployment relief. The Canadian Patriotic Fund was called upon to administer a sum appropriated for this purpose and the total expenditure in the one year was \$4,991,000.

In the following winter the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment was authorized to grant relief assistance to pensioners and to disabled veterans who had received vocational training. Maximum rates from which other income was deductible were fixed at \$50 for a single man and \$75 for a man and wife, graduated upward where there were children to a maximum of \$100. The granting of such assistance was limited to the months of January, February and March of 1921.

In the following year similar relief was paid during January, February and March at somewhat reduced rates. This was later extended to April 30 and subsequently the department was authorized to extend the period indefinitely. By May the rates for a single man were reduced to \$30 and for a man and wife to \$45, with a maximum of \$67 for a family.

These rates remained in effect until 1932 when the government of the day issued a directive that the aggregate disbursement for relief should be reduced by one-third. As the result of this directive the rate for a single man was cut to \$15 and for a man and wife to \$25. The schedule was later amended so as to permit the payment of relief at a scale not less than that granted by the municipalities to unemployed civilians.

In 1935 the whole policy of unemployment assistance was reviewed and a comprehensive set of regulations was issued based upon experience gained during the preceding period of acute unemployment. The average of unemployment assistance expenditures from the years 1931-32 to 1939-40 was in the vicinity of \$2,000,000 a year.

On March 12, 1935, as a result of vigorous representations by the Canadian Legion for a more constructive policy for the rehabilitation of unemployed veterans' an order in council provided for the appointment of a committee, subsequently known as the Hyndman Commission, to carry out an investigation into the existing facilities for the employment of ex-service men, for their care and maintenance while unemployed, and to make recommendations.

The committee reported in May of the same year recommending that the group eligible for relief be enlarged to include any who had seen service in a