

Supply—Veterans Affairs

Perhaps the reason for that is that something is coming in respect to the War Veterans Allowance Act. I urge the government not to delay any longer in connection with this important matter.

Mr. Brooks: For fear that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre may get a copy-right on this request that the War Veterans Allowance Act be amended to provide for an increase in war veterans allowances I should like to state also, as I have on many previous occasions, that I hope this will be given very serious consideration by the government.

Item agreed to.

War veterans allowances and other benefits—

623. Hospital and other allowances—further amount required, \$100,000.

Mr. Lennard: What is meant by "hospital and other allowances"?

Mr. Abbott: The explanation I have here is that the item is required to provide for expenditures arising from the payment of allowances and provision of comforts and clothing to certain classes of veterans receiving treatment, examination or care under the authority of the veterans treatment regulations. It is part of a larger vote of \$2,750,000, making a total vote of \$3 million.

Item agreed to.

Canadian pension commission—

628. To provide for payment, in respect of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1954, of a monthly pension of \$100 to Mrs. Annie Elizabeth Cronk, and to authorize the Canadian pension commission to pay thereafter to Annie Elizabeth Cronk an annual pension during her lifetime, in the same manner and subject to similar terms and conditions as if she were the widow of a soldier holding the rank of private who died while rendering military service in world war I, \$1,200.

Mr. Knowles: I would appreciate it if the minister would explain this item. I do not rise to ask for an explanation in any critical vein. I know nothing of the circumstances of this case at all. It looks to me as though there must have been a deserving case that provision could not be made for in the normal way and for which special provision is being made. It may be that this is a precedent that might be useful on some future occasion. I would be glad if the minister would tell us what the circumstances are.

Mr. Abbott: The item is required to provide for payment to be made to Annie Elizabeth Cronk of a monthly pension of \$100 during her lifetime.

Private Cronk received an eye injury due to the discharge of a blank cartridge in his

face during active militia training at Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1905. He was subsequently awarded a pension under orders in council P.C. 42/2749 and 16/2857 dated October 23, 1936, and November 18, 1937, respectively, at schedule A rates, under section 49 of the Pension Act.

Private Cronk died on March 30, 1953 and the widow lodged claim for pension and burial grant. The Canadian pension commission ruled that there are no provisions in the Pension Act which would enable the commission to authorize a burial grant or an award on behalf of the widow in this case.

Treasury board minutes T.B. 461111 dated January 29, 1954, and directed to the Department of National Defence concurred in the proposal that a pension of \$100 a month for life be paid to this widow effective April 1, 1953, subject to parliamentary approval.

Pensions of a similar nature have been paid in the past from the appropriation applicable to the Pension Act and in accordance therewith the Canadian pension commission were requested to place this pension in payment.

This provision is, therefore, required to cover the pension retroactive to April 1, 1953 and to authorize its payment hereafter as a charge against the appropriation for pensions for disability and death. I have not before me the full details which would have been available to the treasury board when they approved the recommendation, but as a rule approval is usually granted on compassionate grounds of a strong nature.

Item agreed to.

Canadian pension commission—

Terminable services—

629. Post discharge rehabilitation benefits, including the training of merchant seamen and salt water fishermen pensioners—further amount required, \$560,000.

Mr. Green: Can the minister explain this vote and in particular let us know whether any of it will be used for the training of merchant seamen? They are referred to in the description of the vote but from the details it appears to me they do not receive any assistance.

Mr. Abbott: The increased expenditure under this vote is to provide unemployment insurance contributions. There was an underestimate made when the main estimates were prepared. Various calculations were made as to the requirements to be met for payments by the department of combined contributions for employers and veterans in regard to the veterans unemployment insurance fund and they proved to be inadequate.