

*Supply—Veterans Affairs*

Minister of National Health and Welfare, to improve health facilities and general conditions in regard to health of the Indian population will receive the unqualified support, not only of myself and my colleagues but of the political movement which we represent in this house.

**Mr. Applewhaite:** Mr. Chairman, it is hardly necessary to say that I welcome this resolution. There are many things in connection with the Indians I should like to discuss and there are many subjects on which the Indians would like to make representations to this government and to this parliament, and I suggest that the most efficient way to handle this matter would be to have the bill introduced and then we and the Indians could use it as a form of agenda or guide as to what should be done. If the Indians have an opportunity to consider this bill I am sure they will want to make representations, both on the omissions and on what is contained therein. I not only welcome the speedy introduction of the bill but I should like to see it widely distributed so that the Indians may know what it contains. If that were done both this house and the Indians would be saved the necessity of skipping around and discussing all facets of the Indian question instead of only those which in our opinion need consideration.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in.

**Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce)** thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 267, respecting Indians.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

**SUPPLY**

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Dion in the chair.

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

## Soldier Settlement and Veterans Land Act—

547. To provide for the cost of administration of Veterans Land Act; soldier settlement and British family settlement, \$4,563,514.

**Mr. Hansell:** The minister will recall that I asked some questions last night with regard to the veteran who had not served overseas, who was not pensionable or who had not served for 365 days and was thus unable to come under the provisions of the statute in order to obtain a loan. I have to be satisfied with his answer and I am not going to be over-critical, but I should like to ask him two additional questions. The first is: has he any idea how many veterans have applied and have been refused by reason of the fact that they did not come under this particular

[Mr. Coldwell.]

section of the act? My second question is perhaps predicated on the probable answer to the first one. If there are not very many veterans who have been refused, would it not be possible to bring in an amendment to the act so that the veterans might be able to receive the benefit of these loans?

**Mr. Gregg:** Mr. Chairman, we have no record, exact or otherwise, as to the number of applications that have been made. If we had the number, I do not think it would answer my friend's question, because a great deal of publicity was given to the fact that a veteran had to have one year's service in order to qualify. Consequently, quite a number who would have liked to apply did not apply because they knew that. From the records a general estimate could probably be obtained as to the number of service people who had served less than a year. Those are the ones who are not permitted to come under this provision. I believe the number might be larger than the hon. member expects, but I shall try to get it for him.

**Mr. Fulton:** Mr. Chairman, the main concern of a general nature which I have in connection with the Veterans Land Act is still a concern over the limitation in the size of the small holding. It is still too large for many veterans to take advantage of the act. I refer specifically to the limitation which says that a small holding must be a minimum of three acres unless the value of the land is more than \$500, in which case the small holding may be 2.1 acres, I believe, if recommended by the administration. I realize that the purpose of the small holding scheme was not to allow the veteran to have a country home. I know that is the reason for the limitation as to the size of the holding. It is designed to assure that a veteran who is settling on a small holding will genuinely be engaged in at least part-time farming.

I know that the administration makes every effort, where a veteran genuinely desires to settle on a small holding, to interpret the regulations in such a way as to assist him. I know the mere fact that there is a statute, and regulations made under it, sometimes precludes the department from helping deserving cases. The fact is well known, Mr. Chairman, that land values, particularly in and around settled municipalities, are not going down but are continuing to rise. The result is that in many cases the cost of three acres, or even 2.1 acres, of land is much in excess of the maximum assistance available under the act, that is \$6,000. This means that the veteran has to put up the money over and above this \$6,000.

Take the type of small holding around a municipality where a veteran would be