

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, are there any other questions under Item No. 1 that you would like to hear about?

Mr. HERRIDGE: The assistant deputy minister is just looking up some information.

Mr. MACE: I may have it but I do not think I have, sir. If I have I will report it.

Mr. HERRIDGE: I am not speaking of female employees. In the case of other employees what are the reasons for employing any person in any branch of the department who is not a veteran?

Mr. PELLETIER: Mr. Herridge, to answer that question may I say that all our positions with a few exceptions—that is, order in council appointments, of which there are very few—are filled by the Civil Service Commission. As you well know, they are subject to the Civil Service Act which provides for unqualified preference to veterans. We always attempt to get a veteran and the Civil Service Commission helps us in this respect because they must give preference to qualified veterans. It so happens that we have been lucky in the past and, as I say, the vast majority of our employees are veterans either of world war I or world war II, more particularly of world war II. Most of our employees came into the department, as might be expected, in the few years immediately following world war II.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, if there are no more questions on Item 1, we will move on to Item 5:

5 Administration, including the expenses of the war veterans allowances Board, and grants as detailed in the estimates, \$4,097,200.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Could the witness tell us how many war veterans allowance applications were accepted for the recent fiscal year? How many were first world war veterans and how many were second world war veterans?

Mr. E. J. RIDER (*Director, Veterans Welfare Services*): I can tell you that 12,600 were received. I have taken that figure just out of my head. I cannot tell you the breakdown but perhaps Mr. Cromb could give you that information.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, Mr. Rider would like to make a statement before we proceed with welfare services.

Mr. RIDER: Mr. Chairman, it is a great pleasure to be here again with you and I would like to make a short statement about the veterans welfare services branch.

The veterans welfare services branch forms a part of each of the district and sub-district offices of the department. It is a major contact branch both in the offices and in the field where a field service is provided for all branches of the department, the Canadian Pension Commission, the war veterans allowance board, the benevolent funds, trust funds and, in special cases, for other departments. The total establishment of the branch is now 755 positions, 15 fewer than one year ago. Of these positions, 706 are in the districts including 6 for the administration of the veteraft program. Of the 49 positions at head office, 17 administer the returned soldiers and veterans insurance program and 6 are currently in a pool used in the reallocation of positions between districts as needs occur. The remaining 26 provide program direction and control.

Although the war veterans allowance field work and processing continues to be the largest single factor of workload, and although the direct administration of benefits continues at a consistent level, the services of counselling and referral are still of major importance to veterans and their dependants. Often the most effective means of assistance can be provided, particularly to older veterans, not by the duplication of benefits available through other departments, levels of government or private agencies, but by proper counselling and