

Veterans Benefit Act

special force pensions. As at December 31, 1953, there were 823 disability pensions representing an annual liability of \$298,639; there were 117 pensions being paid to dependents representing an annual liability of \$147,792; this makes a total of 940 pensions representing a total annual liability of \$446,431.

The bill also makes available the benefits of the Veterans Land Act to Korean veterans and also the Veterans Insurance Act under the same conditions as they were made available to veterans of world war II.

The house will recall that right from the start of Korean hostilities means were taken to provide for the reinstatement in civil employment of Korean veterans, the same privilege as was enjoyed by the veterans of world war II. These provisions have been in force since hostilities started and I am pleased to be able to say that with the co-operation of employers there has not been one complaint brought to our notice of a Korean veteran not being reinstated in his civil employment.

The benefits of the Veterans Business and Professional Loans Act, which, as hon. members know, is administered by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), are also available to Korean veterans. Similarly the provisions of the Civil Service Act which give preference to veterans who have served in a theatre of operation are in effect for Korean veterans. The benefits of the superannuation act are also made available to those who have active service.

After world war II a system of unemployment assistance known as out of work allowances was in effect. This was supplemented by payments being made to the unemployment insurance fund. In the case of Korean veterans contributions are paid to the unemployment insurance fund on behalf of men who have served since July 5, 1950. If a member of the force has served for at least 91 days he is entitled to a minimum of 3 months' protection under that act. As of December 31, \$1,303,254.60 had been paid into the unemployment insurance fund by the Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of some 21,999 veterans. As I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, the only remaining benefit which this act does not provide is the war veterans allowance and that is because it was made available by amendment to the War Veterans Allowance Act in 1952.

I believe I have covered the scope of this act, and in conclusion I wish to state that it is the intention of the government to bring down other veterans legislation during the

[Mr. Lapointe.]

course of this session, besides the two bills which now appear in my name on the order paper.

It is therefore proposed to set up a special committee on veterans affairs this session. I would suggest, and I am quite sure my suggestion will meet with the approval of hon. members, that this bill, when it has received second reading, as well as the bill which will follow, second reading of which will be moved by my parliamentary assistant, should be referred to this special committee on veterans affairs. There is as yet no notice on the order paper as regards the creation of this committee, but it should appear tomorrow in *Votes and Proceedings*.

Mr. A. J. Brooks (Royal): Mr. Speaker, I very carefully followed the remarks made by the minister and I was particularly pleased with his concluding statement. I think everyone realizes that the men who served in Korea are entitled to all the benefits given to veterans who served in the second world war.

I am not going to discuss their service particularly, except to say that it was as good as the service of the men who served in both world wars, and their conditions of service were undoubtedly just as hard and as difficult as any endured in either of these two wars.

The minister has given us a review of the benefits which have already been received by Korean veterans. These, of course, were made possible by the regulations under the bill known as the Veterans Benefit Act, 1951. The new bill, which will undoubtedly go before the committee, does not seem to me to require examination at any great length here tonight. I might say though, Mr. Speaker, that the announcement made by the minister that a veterans committee will be set up must come as a surprise, and a very pleasant surprise, to most hon. members of this house. I for one welcome the minister's announcement. I do not like to be one of those who say, "I told you so", but I will say that I did tell the minister when the resolution on Bill 82 was before the house that I felt a committee should be set up and that this bill, Bill 101, and also Bill 102, should be referred to a special committee on veterans affairs. But that was not my idea only, Mr. Speaker. That procedure has been advocated by hon. members in all parts of the house, and not only once but time and time again.

I and other hon. members have not only recommended that a special committee be