may appear in person and so is the only qualified body to obtain the actual facts, their decision might well be final as far as the commission was concerned, though still leaving the further opportunity to the applicant of going to the court of appeal. Expressing my own opinion, unquestionably this right of appeal has been abused. I took the trouble to study 105 appeals taken by the commission against favourable decisions of the tribunal, and in 102 of those cases the decision of the tribunal was reversed. Going through the cases as carefully as possible, and trying not to be too sympathetic but to look upon them in a judicial manner, I could not but believe that in many cases at least the appeal court seemed to have ignored the benefit of the doubt clause to which so much weight had been attached and which had been looked upon as a means of correcting many of the weaknesses and evils of the old Pension Act. It does seem to me that before long parliament will have to reconsider the question of appeals, not only of counsel for the commission appearing before the tribunal, but the whole question of appeals from favourable decisions of the tribunal. This has led to great dissatisfaction and in some cases to an absolute nullification of some clauses of the act.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I endorse the remarks of my hon. friend to my left and those of the hon. member for Red Deer. As regards the commission counsel, I do not believe they serve a useful purpose. The gentleman on the pension tribunals throughout Canada render good service on the whole, considering the limitations placed upon their activities, and they themselves are jealous of the interests of the ex-service men and of the treasury as well. So that it is not at all necessary that the commission counsel should appeal on a technicality to the pension appeal court at Ottawa. Formerly the ex-service man was granted the right of appeal, to hear the evidence adduced in his case. That benefit is now extended to enable him to bring in additional evidence, and sometimes the expense in connection with the evidence is paid for him. The manner of hearing cases before the tribunals is therefore much more advantageous to him than it was some years ago. But in the old days, as the minister will recall, there was an appeal to a single member of the old federal appeal board; then a second appeal to a quorum of three members of the board. That system was found in practice to be inadvisable. I am convinced that the system of dual appeals to-day will not be found to work out satisfactorily either to the nation or to the ex-service men. I do not mean to be partisan when I say that there is to-day throughout Canada considerable dissatisfaction, not with the pension tribunals or with the pension advocates, but with the commission counsel, and with the federal appeal court sitting in Ottawa. I would ask hon. members to consider the return just brought down to some questions of mine. Consider the number of cases heard by the tribunals; the number of those that were reviewed by the appeal court in Ottawa; the annual liability in connection with decisions made by the pension tribunals and in connection with decisions made by the appeal court; consider these facts and you are forced reluctantly to the conclusion that we have established a very expensive pension machinery in Canada. It may be premature to condemn the system, but so far the results are not marked in any benefit to the ex-service men throughout Canada. My own opinion is that the tribunals are sincerely desirous of doing all they can for ex-service men, while they are anxious to guard the treasury, consistently with their duties. I believe that a radical revision of the entire system will be called for at least by next year, and that the system of commission counsel should be overhauled, looking to the revision if not the abolition of the federal appeal court in Ottawa.

Mr. MacLAREN: This sum of $50,500,000 is for the pensions. It does not include payments for commission counsel. We must bear in mind that the act was amended only last year by a committee who had served on several occasions previously and who brought in a unanimous report which was accepted unanimously by the house. The amendments have been in operation only seven or eight months and one cannot yet judge what their effect will be. Sufficient time has not elapsed to show how the amended act will operate. I think there are a number of instances where it will fail, and other cases where it will be objectionable and will require further amendment. Still, the time has not yet arrived to express a definite opinion. The criticisms that have been made are valuable, but I do not contemplate dealing with the matter this session. The amendment which it is now proposed to make—if I may refer to the bill that is being introduced—has no reference to the principles of the act or to the various courts that have been appointed; it is simply to expedite the hearing of cases. Why? Because there is such a glaring deficiency to-day that it is a grave injustice to the men who are waiting. I felt that something should be done to remove so marked a grievance. That does not require time to decide; it is