

Increase in Veterans Pensions

Up to date, records show that 6,246 pensioners have received the supplement at married rates and 2,991 at single rates, a total number of 9,237 pensioners in all, which is about 27 per cent of the total number of pensioners receiving rates which make them eligible for the supplement. This unemployability supplement has been of great assistance to the group of pensioners who were hardest hit by the rising cost of living, and the measure, it is felt, has fulfilled the purpose for which it was intended. With the general increase in pension rates, it is deemed no longer necessary to pay the supplement.

The increase in the basic rates will be effective on January 1, 1952, on which date the unemployability supplement will cease.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask the Minister of Veterans Affairs a question? Will he parallel this most welcome announcement that he has made with a similar announcement at an early date with regard to the war veterans allowance?

Mr. McIvor: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the veterans of the lakehead—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. McIvor: We wish to thank the minister and the government for their fair treatment of the veterans, and wish them long life.

Mr. Green: May I ask the Minister of Veterans Affairs a question with regard to the statement? Will there be any change in the ceiling of the income allowed to the recipients of war veterans allowance, many of whom draw small pensions?

Mr. Lapointe: I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that my hon. friend's question does not pertain to this act at all. What I just announced are increases under the Pension Act, and what he has referred to is part of the War Veterans Allowance Act.

Mr. Cruickshank: May I ask a supplementary question? Does this meet the requirements as asked for by the Canadian Legion?

Mr. Lapointe: I believe it does meet the demand of the Legion and of the national council; in fact, I believe that in some points it is more generous than what they asked for.

Mr. Brooks: I did not know that I merited so much applause on rising to my feet. In carrying along the same idea of the question which has just been asked I should like to say that as a veteran I appreciate very much the statement made by the minister. I also want to say that it is just one year too late. It should have been done one year ago. I do

[Mr. Lapointe.]

not think that the government, or the minister, deserves an awful lot of credit for waiting all this time.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Graydon: May I direct a question to the Minister of Veterans Affairs? Will he give an answer to the question which was asked by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) as to why the government has not seen fit to bring in something for war veterans allowance recipients as well as the pensioners.

Mr. Chevrier: He answered that.

Mr. Lapointe: I have already answered that question, which was put to me by the hon. member the other day.

Mr. Graydon: The minister did not answer it at all.

Mr. Lapointe: I did. The question has been answered before.

Mr. Graydon: It should have been brought in at the same time as this.

Mr. Chevrier: I guess you do not like this.

Mr. Graydon: The Legion asked for both.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

WHALING

IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION SIGNED AT WASHINGTON ON DECEMBER 2, 1946

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (for the Minister of Fisheries) moved the first reading of Bill No. 20 (from the Senate), to implement the international convention for the regulation of whaling.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE

REQUEST FOR HELP FOR ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN FARMERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. H. Blackmore (Leithbridge): I desire to direct a question to the government through the Minister of Agriculture. I was not able to give adequate notice beforehand, and therefore I would ask that this question be answered on Monday, if possible. Will the department consider the advisability of making provision, through the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, to grant assistance to farmers in Alberta and Saskatchewan at present in distress through the very abnormally wet season of 1951?