

were received from the national organizations of ex-service men and women, and the entire situation was reviewed by the Department and by the government.

I am pleased to announce that a bill to amend the Pension Act is now virtually ready for introduction. I am prepared at once to give in outline what the government intends to propose:

(a) The basic scale of pensions for total disability and death will be increased and, for all ranks up to and including that of captain, the compensation will be at a rate in excess of that at present being paid on behalf of captains.

(b) The additional pension which is being paid on behalf of the wives and children of disability pensioners, and the children of pensioned widows, will be substantially increased, as will the awards to orphan children.

(c) The maximum award to the eligible parent or parents of a member of the forces who has died will be correspondingly increased.

With the consent of the house I shall now table a schedule reflecting the upward adjustments I have outlined. It is estimated that these adjustments over present rates will involve a total increase in cost of approximately \$12,000,000.

These increased rates will, to a greater or lesser degree, affect over 400,000 persons and in accordance with my original announcement, will be effective from October 1, 1947. The government is anxious to have these retroactive payments made as early as possible. Although everything possible will be done to enable this to be accomplished, it will necessarily be a matter of some weeks, after authority is received, before the adjustment cheques can be ready.

The government has also been giving close and sympathetic consideration to the position of veterans in training, both vocational and university. It has been decided to change the schedule of training rates to provide increases to married veterans, and to those with dependents, in conformity with the rates in this schedule which I now table.

The effect of these increases will be as follows: A married veteran while taking training will receive \$90 per month instead of \$80. In addition, there will be payable on behalf of the first child \$18 instead of \$12, and for the second child \$14, with proportionate increases for succeeding children, so that a married veteran with three children will receive \$134 per month instead of \$114. In addition to these rates, tuition fees will continue to be paid.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

The increased rates are effective as from January 1, 1948. It is hoped that the increases will overcome many of the difficulties being experienced by married veteran students.

Mr. PEARKES: Is provision being made for increases under the War Veterans Allowance Act?

Hon. MILTON F. GREGG (Minister of Veterans Affairs): The amendments to the War Veterans Allowance Act are still under study, and the proposals will be completed before the end of the present week.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Peel): I wish to ask the Prime Minister a question based upon his announcement that legislation is proposed with respect to an increase in veterans' pensions and allowances. I understand that the increases cannot be made effective until the legislation has passed through parliament. If that is so, may I suggest to the Prime Minister that when the legislation is brought in we give it priority. We give priority to veterans generally, and I think we should give priority to this legislation.

Mr. GREEN: A further question along the same line: Is it the intention to send that amendment to the Pension Act to the special committee?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: To send which amendment?

Mr. GREEN: Is it the intention to send to the special committee being set up to consider veterans affairs the bill amending the Pension Act?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I cannot give an answer at the moment, but I will have a reply later.

[Later:]

Mrs. STRUM: The Prime Minister mentioned married student veterans. Does that mean there will be no increase in the allowances to the unmarried man or girl veteran?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I can speak for the unmarried man; there will be none for him. My hon. friend, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, may speak for the ladies.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mrs. STRUM: Student veterans.

Mr. GREGG: It is correct; there is no increase indicated for the unmarried veteran.

Mrs. STRUM: Or the girls.

Mr. GREGG: Veterans, men or women.