

investments other than their homes. That is a suggestion which I hope the veterans committee will take into consideration, and with these words, Mr. Speaker, I take my seat.

I have some convictions on this matter. It is no light thing for a man to offer his life for his country. I had three members of my own family do so. I am not boasting at all, but it is no light thing, even for those who remain at home, to go through the strain and stress and worry of not knowing what will happen to these young men as they serve in an actual theatre of war. This country is vast enough and wealthy enough and has potential production enough to offer such men security for life, and in that case I go so far as to say that much of our veterans affairs department could be scrapped. There would be no questions asked. All you would have to do would be to look up the two conditions required: Did they volunteer their lives? Did they enter an actual theatre of war? You would not need a pension commission for that. You would simply need a good clerk to look up the record, and instructions would then go forth.

Mr. BLACKMORE: And you would not need any psychiatrist.

Mr. HANSELL: No psychiatrist, no means test, nothing of the kind.

An hon. MEMBER: No parliamentary assistant.

Mr. HANSELL: Perhaps you could do away with the parliamentary assistant and perhaps with parliamentary committees. I am not saying there would not be a great deal in connection with the administration of veterans affairs, because there would still be those who did not volunteer; there would still be those who did not see an actual theatre of war, and you would still have to conduct the veterans affairs department. But as regards those who volunteered and faced death, to them belongs a life of comfort from now on.

Mr. H. W. HERRIDGE (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to speak in this debate, but I must rise and express opposition to the unsound proposals made by the hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Hansell). I am quite sure that the men who served the country did not serve in a mercenary spirit and do not want to be treated for the rest of their lives as mercenary troops. I believe that the men, and the veterans organizations that represent them, want to see that those who were injured receive adequate compensation. They want to make certain that

those who returned from the war shall have an opportunity to earn a decent living and obtain their security in that way. I also believe that they want the dependents of the veterans to be well cared for. Because of that, I support the remarks made by the various speakers this afternoon in relation to this bill. I will not repeat what many speakers have said. I think that is unnecessary. I believe, however, as the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank) has pointed out, that this bill does not go far enough, and I trust that when it goes before the veterans affairs committee we shall be able to secure some further amendments to this bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

Mr. GREGG: I am quite sure, Mr. Speaker, that the house would prefer that the various points raised by hon. gentlemen this afternoon should be studied carefully in detail when they are brought before the veterans affairs committee, but there are one or two points, as brought out by several hon. members, to which I should like to refer. One hon. member stated that veterans with 100 per cent disability were helpless, and another said that a 100 per cent pensioner is practically dead. I should like to correct that at once.

I happen to have an outline which bears on that; and of the high disability cases, including the 100 per cent, registered with the department, there are actually employed 54 per cent. I am not saying that is full-time, year-round employment, but they are employed at some times during the year. There are 34 per cent on treatment or under training for employment, five per cent unemployed, and seven per cent not accounted for.

I wanted to refute immediately the impression given that the high disability pensioner was a helpless case. It is not so.

Several hon. members spoke with regard to the incorporation in this bill of an increase for the chairman and members of the pension commission. The only comment I wish to make is that, before I entered this chamber, for the past two or three years, as hon. members know, there has been going on in all government departments, in co-operation with the civil service commission, under a special committee, an investigation into salaries from top to bottom, and that recommendations in this regard were not confined to my department but have been general. This was part of the whole and was partly put into effect, I believe, a year ago.

The hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. White), if I understood him correctly,