

War Veterans' Allowance Act

urged this upon the government, but it was the case and it is the case today that the Canadian Legion in its briefs is continuing to urge this very same stand.

It is also true that a number of hon. members who are today backbenchers on the government side called for action in this regard. The hon. member for Rosthern referred to the utterances of the Prime Minister made on July 12, 1956.

Mr. McIvor: It is a good day.

Mr. Hahn: As recorded at page 5897 of *Hansard* of that date the Prime Minister called for this very same thing and, being the type of spokesman he is, he did it in no uncertain terms. We all recognize his straightforward method of speaking. He did not just say, "These are half-way measures and there is a possibility that these things should be done," but rather he called upon the government in unequivocal terms to take action in this regard. It was a demand made on the government of that day that the ceiling should be raised to \$1,200 in the case of a single veteran and \$2,000 in the case of a married veteran. I, too, am one of those who have spoken from time to time on this same subject as did members of the C.C.F. and other members in the Conservative group. I see no reason for the slight increase which is indicated in the schedule attached to the bill.

However, of even greater concern to me than the limit of \$1,200 and \$2,000 set on this matter is the discrimination we impose upon the veteran who is disabled and unable to find work because of his condition as compared with the receipts of the veteran who is able to work. Yesterday the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Quelch) drew to the attention of the house the fact that there was a difference in the amount. We did not know what the new changes would be until we heard what the minister had to say in introducing the bill but they do not do anything toward correcting this inequitable state of affairs.

I have prepared a comparative chart to indicate what the situation actually is and with your permission I would like to refer to it. A single veteran will receive a monthly rate of \$840 under the new scale and will be permitted casual earnings of \$600—that is if he can find a job that will pay him at the rate of \$50 a month—and he has allowable earnings of up to \$240 which would give him a total of \$1,680. A single disability pensioner, on the other hand, if we were to assume his disability would be one based on the same rate as casual earnings of, let us say \$50 a month, would be in

receipt of \$600. Under the terms of the bill before us he would be in receipt of a war veterans allowance of \$480 which would give him a maximum total annual income of \$1,080. In other words, we have a situation where a disabled veteran who probably requires additional money because he has to take taxis, hire assistance in doing his chores, pay for medicine and so on is allowed a maximum annual income of only \$1,080 while the veteran who is capable of working is permitted to receive the full amount of the monthly rate for casual earnings as well as his allowance which would give him an income of \$1,680, or a difference of \$600, the amount of the casual earnings.

In the case of a married veteran the monthly rate is \$120 which on the basis of 12 months would give him \$1,440 a year. He is permitted casual earnings of \$600 and with allowable earnings of \$25 on the basis of 12 months he would have \$300, or a total annual income of \$2,340. In the case of the married disability pensioner in receipt of a pension equal to casual earnings he would receive \$600 and with the war veterans allowance of \$95 per month he would receive \$1,140 or a total annual income of \$1,740. He is in an equally unfortunate position as a single disability pensioner in that he will receive \$600 less than an individual who is capable of working.

I am fully aware that the \$600 represents the actual earnings of the individual who is able to work but I do not see why we should penalize the disabled veteran who through no fault of his own cannot take an occupation. He has probably put in the same length of service as his more fortunate fellow veteran but we have permitted the other chap who is capable of accepting employment an additional \$600 a year. If the disability pensioner has an annuity it is charged against his war veterans allowance. The annuitant on a disability pension and the one eligible for war veterans allowance both are penalized in the same way.

The disability pensioner needs extras and requires the \$600 the casual earner is permitted to earn. I would suggest that the act be changed and I would hope that the government will look forward to changing it in another year to make it possible for a disability pensioner in receipt of war veterans allowance to receive the equivalent of \$50 per month as additional assistance to help him for he is very much in need.

The extension of the act to include veterans who had service in the United Kingdom only and who were not overseas is a welcome change. We in this group accept it as a forward step, one that has been called for over