

Veterans Insurance Act

extensive for us to get anywhere by using that method. These changes in the principles and important provisions of statutes are not in my opinion the sort of thing which should emanate from a commission of five or seven men.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER (speaking from a seat beside the Minister of National Health and Welfare): I should like to ask the minister one question.

Mr. KNOWLES: What is the portfolio?

Mr. HACKETT: Another competitor for the leadership.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: This is just an anticipatory step. It will not be long before all of us are over here.

Does the answer the minister has just given apply to recommendations as well?

Mr. ILSLEY: I shall give consideration to that suggestion, but we are not going to the lengths which apparently the hon. member thinks we should go.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Ilesley thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 348, respecting the Revised Statutes of Canada.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

VETERANS INSURANCE ACT

AMENDMENTS WITH RESPECT TO ELIGIBILITY

The house in committee on Bill No. 60, to amend the Veterans Insurance Act—Mr. Gregg—Mr. Golding in the chair.

On section 1—Persons eligible for insurance.

Mr. KNOWLES: Before we proceed, could the minister say whether copies of this bill as amended, and others to follow, are available?

Hon. MILTON F. GREGG (Minister of Veterans Affairs): If the committee desires, I shall outline the amendments made to the bill.

Subsection 1 of section 3 of the act sets out the various classes with whom the minister may enter into a contract of insurance and the time within which the persons must apply for a contract of insurance.

It is now proposed to add to those classes and, at the same time, extend the period within which a person eligible to obtain insurance must apply therefor.

Accordingly, subsection 1 of section 3 is being repealed and a new subsection for the purpose above mentioned is being put forward.

[Mr. Ilesley.]

Paragraph (a) of the said subsection extends the time of three years in which a veteran must apply, to six years from the date of his discharge from service or six years from the 20th day of February, 1945, which was the date upon which, by proclamation, the Veterans Insurance Act came into force.

Paragraph (b) merely re-enacts the present paragraph (b) of the act.

Paragraph (c) enables the widow or widower of a person who died on service during the war to apply for insurance within six years after the death of that person or within six years after the coming into force of the act.

Paragraph (d) enables members of the permanent force to take advantage of the act. This paragraph puts into statutory form the provisions of order in council, P.C. 467, of the 7th February, 1947, by which the benefits of the act were extended to members of the permanent force. The time within which these members of the permanent force may apply for insurance is six years from the 1st of April, 1946, that being the date on which they first became entitled by virtue of the above-mentioned order in council to apply for insurance.

Paragraph (e). Those merchant seamen who received or who were entitled to receive a bonus pursuant to the merchant seamen special bonus orders are now, by virtue of order in council, P.C. 3227, of the 3rd of May, 1945, entitled to apply for insurance. This class is now being given those rights by statute, and, in addition, the benefits of the act are extended to those merchant seamen who received or who were eligible to receive a war service bonus pursuant to the merchant seamen war service bonus order of 1944.

Paragraph (f). As the act presently stands, any person who is in receipt of a pension relating to the war may apply for a contract of insurance. It has been found that the wording of the act is sufficiently broad to allow parents or persons *in loco parentis* of the deceased member of the forces to apply. It was never intended that dependents of the deceased member of the forces, other than his widow, would be entitled to insurance. That condition is now cured by confining "pensioners" to those who obtain their pension by reason of their own disability. Widows of persons who died during service will obtain their rights under proposed paragraph (c). It may be noted that some parents and others *in loco parentis* have already been issued policies and that although this subsection is, by clause 3 of the bill, made retroactive to the 1st of April, 1947, paragraph (f) is exempted from this retroactive effect, and the policies that