

Veterans Affairs

spoken that that did happen between the first war and 1939. At that time there was a much less sympathetic attitude in the department than there was in 1919 and 1920, so far as the administration of veterans' legislation passed after the first war was concerned. I am quite certain that will occur again in the department.

Mr. Mutch: Since the hon. gentleman has challenged me, I would not concede that. I believe that the interest, the knowledge and the understanding of the intent of parliament was much greater, and that within the scope of the legislation individuals were much better treated in 1939 than anyone thought possible in 1919.

Mr. Wright: The hon. member who has just spoken has expressed his opinion, and I am expressing mine. I am expressing an opinion which I think was held by a great number of veterans. I believe I am expressing an opinion which is becoming prevalent among the veterans today. They believe that as time goes on there is a less sympathetic administration of the various acts under the veterans' charter.

I believe one of the main reasons for establishing a veterans affairs committee is to ensure that the intent and purpose expressed by the veteran members of the committee when the various acts were passed are carried out by the administration as the years go by. If that were not a fact, why would the Legion representatives ask for a permanent veterans affairs committee? That has been one of the things we have had placed before us by practically every representative of the Legion during the last three years. Surely they must have a reason for that. The Legion usually has sound reasons for making requests to this government. From time to time the government has seen fit to listen to these representations and, in part at least, to put them in the form of legislation.

I should like to hear from the hon. member who has interrupted as to just why we should not have a permanent veterans affairs committee, in view of the fact such a committee could assist the government in the administration of the veterans' charter. That is the only reason I have for putting forward this suggestion at this time. It is a suggestion which I believe would assist the government in keeping the veterans' charter what it was intended to be, something of real assistance to our veterans in their re-establishment in civil life.

Another matter which is being brought up this session is that of further assistance to

veterans' children for education. This subject was discussed when the charter was first being considered by the veterans affairs committee. On different occasions I, along with other members of that committee, asked that some provision should be made in the veterans' charter for the education of veterans' children. It is only now, after several years, that the government is considering the matter.

I do not know what legislation the government may introduce concerning assistance to the veterans' children for education, but I hope they will appoint a veterans affairs committee of this house and submit the legislation to that committee. In this way the government would receive the benefit of the knowledge of the members of this committee, and that would be of assistance to the government. As yet we have had no indication that it is the intention of the government to set up the veterans affairs committee and refer that particular legislation to them. I believe that should be done.

If this motion were accepted and a permanent veterans affairs committee established, it would add to the effectiveness of the veterans' charter by reason of the fact that the committee would be kept in close touch with those who are affected by the charter. I am sure that if he had been here the minister would have had something to say about this matter. I am sorry he is not in his seat tonight. Probably his assistant may have something to say on the subject. I hope what he says will be sympathetic, and I hope he will agree with me that we should have a permanent veterans affairs committee of this house.

Mr. G. A. Cruickshank (Fraser Valley): I should like to say a word or two on this motion. I am rather surprised that the hon. member took up so much time. On a motion as important as this, I would not try to talk it out. I should like to say that I agree with him, but if the matter comes to a vote I shall not be able to vote because I am paired with one of the members in his group. I am putting forward a different argument in favour of the motion.

I happen to be a member of two committees of this house, I believe. One is the committee on the restaurant. It might just as well be sitting in Korea for all it does. Then I have the honour to be the chairman of the printing committee. I believe I have been the chairman ever since 1940. We have had one meeting since 1940. I would have liked to have meetings oftener. Once when I thought we were going to have a room all to ourselves I saw a picture in the press of