

ment service. A shortage of active treatment beds was in evidence, a problem created largely by the growing number of older veterans requiring domiciliary care rather than active hospital treatment. This, in turn, is related to the general problem arising from an ever-lengthening life span and an increasing proportion of older people in our population, and will only be resolved as more special residential accommodation for these senior citizens becomes available.

12. The Canadian Corps raised the special question of free treatment and hospitalization for members of the peacetime forces. As these servicemen do not come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Veterans Affairs, this matter is one that should be taken up with the Department of National Defence.

#### *Hong Kong Veterans*

13. The Hong Kong Veterans appeared before the Committee renewing their appeal for special compensation for slave labour, and for expenses incurred in making similar representations in the past. This problem is well known to the government. Only last November, as a result of continuing representations, the War Claims Regulations were amended, providing for an increase of 50 percent in maltreatment awards.

14. The Committee investigated this further appeal with extreme care. Mr. Paul Theriault, Secretary of the War Claims Commission, appeared before the Committee and was questioned. Information as to the present state of the War Claims Fund was obtained from the Minister of Finance.

15. It was revealed that the maltreatment awards on a per diem basis under the War Claims Regulations include compensation for forced labour or any pecuniary loss suffered as a result of maltreatment during the period of internment. It was further revealed that this group includes some 4,000 prisoners of war in the European war theatre as well as the 1,300 prisoners of the Japanese.

16. The War Claims Fund derived from ex-enemy assets amounted to \$10 million. Of this total, some \$5.2 million came from Japanese sources. Out of the \$5.2 million the Hong Kong prisoners and their dependants received \$3,021,414 in maltreatment allowance. Canadians taken prisoner while serving with British forces received \$188,940, and civilians, \$494,788. A balance of \$1.5 million of the Japanese awards has been paid to civilians for death, personal injury and property loss claims in the Far East.

17. A sum of \$6 million remains in the fund. The fund is being rapidly depleted at the present time due to the large payments in respect of the supplementary maltreatment awards approved by the government last fall, and an earnest endeavour to settle claims as quickly as possible. Outstanding claims against it are far in excess of the remaining balance, and as a result of the recent publicity new claims are coming in daily. Because of these facts, the Secretary of State last November had stated that no further payments could be made to the Hong Kong group.

18. The Committee appreciates the difficulties of assuring an equitable distribution of the fund. At the same time it is aware of the special problems of veterans who were prisoners of war. It suggests that, in view of the obvious impossibility of settling all claims, the problem might be partially resolved by using a portion of the remaining balance to set up a Prisoner of War Benevolent