

Effects of Atomic Radiation

the development and scope of the uses of nuclear energy for the welfare of mankind."

I can assure hon. members that this government will continue to emphasize and support a progressive program of radiation protection in Canada.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): The minister's report on this matter, based upon the report of the United Nations scientific committee, emphasizes its vital importance. The United Nations report points out what we are sometimes prone to forget that sources of radiation danger can lie in civilian activities as well as in the explosion of nuclear weapons. While perhaps these non-military activities are dangerous and do not easily lend themselves to international control, or in some cases to national control, nevertheless we can certainly do something on an international basis about the danger from nuclear explosions, as was pointed out by the Prime Minister yesterday.

The report of the minister also emphasized once again the necessity of putting an end to tests of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. While the Prime Minister quite rightly said yesterday that there should be developed international machinery for the enforcement of such a ban and the detection of violations, and while the conference now proceeding at Geneva has apparently shown that such an end could be achieved without too much difficulty by means of international agreement, nevertheless if we cannot get an international agreement of that kind, and if this conference at Geneva also shows—as has been indicated by experts in the United States and other countries—that no country could violate a ban of this kind without that violation being detected by national mechanisms in other countries, then bearing in mind that with all these implications a violation could not take place without detection, we should perhaps give consideration to the banning of tests of this kind at least for a period of time even if we do not have a system of international inspection.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): I think the comprehensive statement of the Minister of National Health and Welfare points up very vividly and very accurately the great danger to the world of a continuing build-up of atomic radiation. While most of us think of atomic explosions and the danger they constitute as something in the nature of a sudden calamity for the people of the world, nevertheless such a calamity might be just as serious if it results from a continued build-up of atomic radiation.

[Mr. Monteith (Perth).]

The Prime Minister said yesterday that the U.S.S.R. had announced it was ending its series of atomic tests. This announcement followed a large number of such tests made within the U.S.S.R. and therefore, the Prime Minister said, this is a very convenient time for the U.S.S.R. to end its own tests. This is no doubt correct and is one of the major reasons why the U.S.S.R. has decided to cease tests at this time. Even assuming that to be the fact, which no doubt is the case, it would seem to me that the western world could now take a forward step by a real act of faith, namely announcing that the west, too, will cease nuclear tests in the hope that this would mean a permanent end to nuclear explosions.

I think the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition was very significant, and I hope it will be taken up by Canada at the United Nations and elsewhere. We in the C.C.F. say to the Leader of the Opposition: we welcome the support you are now giving to the stand which the C.C.F. has taken for some considerable time, that nuclear tests should be ended forthwith.

VETERANS INSURANCE ACT**AMENDMENTS TO INCREASE AMOUNT PAID TO BENEFICIARY AS ANNUITY, REMOVE RESTRICTIONS, ETC.**

Hon. A. J. Brooks (Minister of Veterans Affairs) moved that the house go into committee at the next sitting to consider the following resolution, which has been recommended to the house by His Excellency:

That it is expedient, in the proposed measure to amend the Veterans Insurance Act, Bill C-34, now before the house, that clause 1 be deleted and that the following be substituted therefor:

1. (1) Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1) of section 3 of the Veterans Insurance Act are repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"(a) with a veteran, at any time on or before the 30th day of September, 1962; or

(b) with any of the following persons, at any time on or before the 30th day of September, 1962,

(i) the widow or widower of a veteran, if the minister has not entered into a contract of insurance with the veteran,

(ii) the widow or widower of a person who died on service during the war,

(iii) a member of the regular forces who has not been released from such forces and who was engaged in service during the war,

(iv) a merchant seaman who received or was eligible to receive a bonus pursuant to the merchant seamen special bonus order, or a seaman who received or was eligible to receive a war service bonus pursuant to the merchant seamen war service bonus order, 1944, and

(v) any other person who is, under the Pension Act, in receipt of a disability pension relating to the war."

Motion agreed to.