

their income from other sources, guarantees a maximum annual income of \$1,740 to those who are single and of \$2,940 to those who are married. War veterans not in receipt of a personal income are entitled to an allowance of \$105 monthly in the case of single persons and of \$175 monthly for those who are married.

On the other hand, if he is able to prove he qualifies, he is entitled to receive from the Assistance Fund a supplement proportionate to his needs, but which does not bring his total income over the maximum amount I have just mentioned. Perhaps the hon. member will be interested in learning that two thirds of the veterans who receive allowances receive also the old age security pension, and in some cases the guaranteed income supplement, so that their income reaches the maximum allowed.

Moreover, the two increases brought to the guaranteed income supplement and to the old age security pension in 1968 and in 1969 are not taken into account for the calculation of the maximum amount allowed according to the War Veterans Allowance Act.

In the course of the afternoon, someone raised a question in this respect and my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) answered it.

It should also be pointed out that veterans who receive allowances and who work occasionally can, within the established limits require that this income be not taken into account in calculating the maximum set by the legislation. For instance, the maximum income of a married beneficiary is \$4,140, whilst it is \$2,540 for a bachelor. Those figures show that the situation of veterans is better, owing to the provisions of the War Veterans Allowances Act. As hon. members well know, there are other benefits in addition to those allowances, for instance free hospitalisation, and free medical care.

The provisions of the act have been constantly extended since it became effective. As a matter of fact, they have already been amended 14 times. The rates have been increased periodically taking into account cost of living increases. These provisions are under continuous review as we can be seen, for example, in the allowance to a single person which was \$20 a month in 1930 and which amounts now, in the same circumstances, to \$105 a month. The government intends to continue its review of this act and, periodically, to correct the rates if circumstances warrant it.

29180—426½

Suggested Pension Payment Corrections

In 1962, parliament approved a similar measure known as Part XI of the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act. This legislation provides for the extension to some civilian groups of the benefits provided for in the War Veterans Allowance Act, in the case of civilians who have rendered meritorious services to the nation in wartime although they were not in the armed forces. Included in such groups are, for instance, merchant seamen, volunteer firemen, members of the *Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit*. Therefore, those people enjoy a guaranteed annual income for the same reason as the recipients of veterans' allowances.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Moreover, a considerable number of veterans and dependents regularly receive allowances under the Pension Act. While speaking of the Pension Act, I am not of course referring to a welfare legislation as such, but rather to a compensation plan for disability or death due to military service or having occurred meanwhile.

At the end of the last calendar year, that is on December 31, 1968, 166,000 pensions had been paid under the Pension Act. This pension is payable as long as the eligible disability remains. Thus, it can be said that this legislation assures a guaranteed annual income. I should specify that the pensions paid under the legislation are by right an indemnity and cannot be considered as welfare benefits.

I should also, Mr. Speaker, make another point quite clear. I stated previously that whoever receives a disability pension under the Pension Act is thereby qualified for benefits under the War Veterans Allowance Act. Thus, a veteran who draws a small pension, due to a partial disability, can have his income raised to the maximum amount provided by the War Veterans Allowance Act, as long as he meets the other requirements. Therefore, those programs are very important and we have an idea of their scope if we consider that in the estimates for the next fiscal year, parliament is asked to vote \$224 million under the Pension Act and \$103 million under the War Veterans' Allowance Act and the Assistance Fund. Those are huge amounts and they are an evident and tangible sign of how concerned the Canadian government is and has always been with respect to veterans.

It will be recalled, Mr. Speaker, that in 1965, a special committee established by my