

Supply—Veterans Affairs

Mr. McCusker: Compared to how many in Saskatchewan?

Mr. Gregg: That is Saskatoon and Regina, which takes in all Saskatchewan?

Mr. McCusker: Yes.

Mr. Gregg: 432.

Mr. McCusker: I do not think that there are seven times as many veterans in British Columbia as there are in Saskatchewan.

The Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. McCusker: I should like to have an answer to that question.

Mr. Gregg: The census is to be taken next year and we shall have for the first time in Canada a real picture of the veteran population. The bureau of statistics have agreed to do that. Until then I am sure I would not be able to answer the question correctly.

Item agreed to.

Payments to or for veterans and dependents—

541. Unemployment assistance, \$50,000.

Mr. McLure: This is only a small item, but I should like the minister to explain what unemployment assistance is. Large amounts have been gone over tonight. For instance, there is an item for temporary employment. We have already voted about \$25 million without asking any questions. But I should like to know what this small item is.

Mr. Gregg: This vote is a traditional one. It has been in the estimates for about twenty years. One of these days perhaps we shall merge it with something else. It has played a useful part, and it provides for controlled assistance, generally in the form of cash, to provide shelter, lodging, fuel and food to veterans in the following classifications who are unemployed and in necessitous circumstances:

(1) Veterans who served with the Canadian forces during world war I and who are in receipt of a small disability pension under the Canadian Pension Act. Perhaps this will be some satisfaction to the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra because some of those he mentioned may receive assistance here.

(2) Veterans who served with His Majesty's forces other than Canadian during world war I or with forces of His Majesty's allies during world war I who are in receipt of a small disability pension and were resident in Canada on or before December 1, 1924. Under category B this little fund will now be relieved by the effect of my bill that went through the other day. I am sorry, but if

[Mr. Gregg.]

the hon. member for Queens asked me a direct question, I did not catch it. May I ask if he would repeat it.

Mr. McLure: I was just asking what this amount was for, and the minister has given practically a general view of it. How much of this was paid out last year? Under what terms does a veteran make application for this assistance? It is something new. I do not know whether or not any of it is being paid out in my province. I should just like to find out whether it is or not; and if not, why not.

Mr. Gregg: Each district is familiar with this little emergency fund; and from time to time there come to their attention veterans within this category who are in need of assistance immediately; and amounts from this fund are used. For the year 1949-50 a total of \$29,964 was utilized. Of that, \$3,848 was in the way of cash assistance to veterans in need in the categories I have mentioned; \$240 was to assist in the purchase of clothing. The number of veterans involved was 1,068.

Mr. Bater: Are these veterans who cannot qualify under unemployment insurance or is this a supplement to unemployment insurance?

Mr. Gregg: Yes. These veterans would not be able to qualify under unemployment insurance, no.

Mr. Gillis: Is that fund administered provincially, and who administers it?

Mr. Gregg: Our district office in Halifax, Saint John, Charlottetown and so on.

Mr. Gillis: You have not the break-down of that by provinces, have you?

Mr. Gregg: No, I have not.

Item agreed to.

Soldier Settlement and Veterans Land Act—

547. To provide for the cost of administration of Veterans Land Act; soldier settlement and British family settlement, \$4,563,514.

Mr. Hansell: The minister will have to tell me whether or not I am speaking under the correct item. If I should come in on a later item, I shall be glad to defer discussion until then. But I have a case which might be typical of several others. It is that of a war veteran who sought the benefits of the loans offered to veterans for machinery to run his farm. This particular veteran had only put in 259 days and his service was in the western hemisphere. Evidently he was not able to get the loan. In a letter to the minister I explained the situation and I received a reply from one of his officials who evidently answered the inquiry owing to the minister's