

Pension Act

veterans will receive and I submit that we have the right to discuss other things that will determine whether or not he will get that increase. As I understand it, the point which the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Brooks) is seeking to make is that some veterans will not get any benefit from the increase in the disability pension because of the ceiling under the War Veterans Allowance Act.

Mr. Lapointe: That is in the War Veterans Allowance Act, not this act.

Mr. Knowles: That ceiling provision is in that act, but its effect will be felt by veterans drawing disability pensions as provided by this act. I submit that Your Honour would be in order in telling us that we cannot now discuss the War Veterans Allowance Act generally; I submit also that Your Honour would be in order in telling us that we cannot during this debate propose any increase in the war veterans allowance; we shall have to do that on another occasion. But I submit that you should permit us to discuss the effect of the ceiling imposed by the other act on veterans who are supposedly going to get an increase under the measure now before us.

Mr. Speaker: I may be able to settle this matter. I do not think there is a great deal of difference among hon. members at this time. We all agree that the legislation before us has to do with pensions, that it has nothing whatever to do directly with the War Veterans Allowance Act. May I point out also to hon. members that there is an amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the throne dealing directly with the War Veterans Allowance Act.

I did not take from what the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Brooks) said that he was going to discuss the War Veterans Allowance Act at this time. The point has been raised that if a pensioner receives an increase in his pension there will be a reduction in the amount he receives under the War Veterans Allowance Act. The suggestion is that the amount received under the War Veterans Allowance Act should not be reduced. Is that not a matter which should come up when the War Veterans Allowance Act is being amended?

Mr. Green: It could be put in the Pension Act.

Mr. Speaker: I doubt if it could be put in the Pension Act; it seems to me that that is an amendment which would have to be made to the War Veterans Allowance Act. I think that all members will agree that a passing reference to the War Veterans Allowance Act should be permitted as long as

[Mr. Knowles.]

there is no debate or discussion on that particular legislation. I do not think that a definite ruling is necessary at the present moment, but I would ask hon. members not to debate the War Veterans Allowance Act at this time and to make any reference to that act as brief as possible.

Mr. Brooks: I thoroughly understand your ruling and suggestion, Mr. Speaker. I might say that in the discussion we have had on the point of order the point I was trying to make has been brought out and I do not see any necessity of saying anything more. The men who need an increase in pension most are those in receipt of war veterans allowances, and they are the men who will not get consideration. I had hoped that there would be an amendment to the act which would cover those particular cases. However, we can deal with that when the bill is before the committee.

There is another point I wish to make in connection with dependent parents. The hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) asked a question about this the other day and the minister stated that a dependent parent did not receive a pension under the act as of right but under an award by the commission after a means test. That is correct. There is a ceiling on the pension granted dependent parents and I think that might very well be dealt with in the bill to be presented. As a matter of fact the minister suggested that we should wait until we had the bill when we would know what was the attitude of the government. I took it from that that there probably would be an amendment in the bill covering dependent parents. I do not think there is anything further I wish to say at this time. I repeat that opposition members are very pleased indeed that this legislation is being brought down, as are the people of the country. However, I should like to say to the minister and to the government that I think it would have come with much better grace if it had been granted a year ago. Whether or not they believe it, there is a feeling throughout this country—and I think it is just—that the government has been dragooned into this action particularly by Legion organizations throughout the country, by public opinion and also by opposition members of the House of Commons.

Mr. G. A. Cruickshank (Fraser Valley): I should like to say a word or two with respect to this legislation. I have the greatest admiration for the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Brooks) who served not only in the first war but in the second war with the greatest of distinction. I know that at heart he wants to do the best he can on behalf of the