

Veterans Benefit Act

has been proposed, in future the minister will go back to the other method of dealing with amendments to our statutes.

Mr. Clarence Gillis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, as one member in the house, I am pleased with the bill. I think it indicates that there is no finality to veterans legislation. I am also pleased that the minister made the announcement that a veterans affairs committee will be set up. I think consideration should be given to making the veterans affairs committee a standing committee of the house.

As I understand the principle of the bill before us, it is merely to open up the many sections of veterans legislation for the purpose of relating the Korean forces to it, and talking about the whole matter generally. I think that is the correct approach. I agree with the hon. member who has just taken his seat, in expressing the hope that we will be able to bring about a consolidation at this time, and that we will not have any new forces to include in years to come.

There is a good deal of material in this measure that could be debated for a long time. However, in view of the fact that the bill is going to a committee, and that the committee will be in a position to call representatives of the department for questioning, it may not be necessary to discuss the matter at great length now.

It is understood that the minister is bringing in a resolution tomorrow for the purpose of setting up a committee. May I express the hope that the resolution will be broad enough in its terms of reference to enable it to discuss many matters that are not exactly spelled out in this bill. I hope the committee will not be simply a legislation examining committee, such as we had on at least one occasion. The War Veterans Allowance Act very definitely has to be examined at this session of parliament; because if there is one question all members are running into right across the country, it is the necessity for changes in the War Veterans Allowance Act. I know the minister is aware of this fact.

Then, I would like to see a full discussion in the committee with respect to veterans education. I agree with the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green) that a good job was done after the last war. I do suggest however that we failed in one respect, and that was that the whole emphasis was on university training. A large percentage of the young men who came out of the services and did not have university entrance qualifications were denied education. I think any examination of the

records will prove that we should have gone into an extended vocational training scheme at that time, along with our university scheme. This is something that is badly needed. I fear that if in the committee we are permitted only to examine the terms of this bill, then we may not be allowed to discuss educational matters.

I hope the minister will avoid a long discussion tomorrow, when he brings in his resolution, by making the terms of reference broad enough to prevent a discussion in the house and to permit discussions in the committee of all phases of veterans problems. I do not want to speak at greater length at this time, and I look forward to giving these matters consideration in committee.

Mr. Elmore Philpott (Vancouver South): I just want to add a word to say how glad I think all veterans of the whole country, certainly all the veteran members on both sides of this house, will be at the minister's announcement tonight that a special committee is to be appointed this year. I have a personal reason for being glad because now it gives me the answer to the 427 postcards that are lying on my desk upstairs.

What I have seen in this house so far would indicate to me that, regardless of the terms of reference, hon. members have no particular difficulty in discussing whatever they have uppermost in their minds. I know that most of us who are in close contact with what the veterans are saying and thinking know perfectly well that the one thing that is uppermost in their minds across the country today is the war veterans allowance and particularly the level of extra permissible income on that allowance.

All I should like to say, Mr. Speaker, is that in view of the fact that Canada has long had the deserved reputation all over the world of having the best and most advanced veterans welfare legislation in the whole world, I hope the terms of reference that the minister will bring down tomorrow will be very liberal indeed.

Mr. G. C. Nowlan (Digby-Annapolis-Kings): I certainly do not want to hold up this legislation, but I should like to have one minute to endorse what has been said by others in expressing appreciation of the fact that we now know that there will be a committee, and it is our prayer that the committee will be worth while and that the terms of reference will be wide enough to include various matters, and particularly the war veterans allowance. If that is not done I am afraid there will be a great deal of disappointment and the results will certainly not be as good as they otherwise would.