

*War Veterans' Allowances*

believe the little thrust he made at this government, when he said that at last it had seen the light, was really worthy of him.

Mr. GREEN: It sees the light so seldom that I had to remark on the fact.

Mr. MacLEAN (Prince): I think in all fairness it should be said that all governments regardless of which party has been in power, have endeavoured to do the very best they could for the returned men, having regard to the financial situation and their ability to deal with the question, and I believe this proposed legislation will measure up to all our expectations in this regard.

Mr. PELLETIER: I desire to congratulate the minister on bringing in this resolution, and I agree with the legislation as far as it goes. I understand that this is not the time to debate these questions at length, but since the bill will be based upon this resolution I think the minister might very well give us a little more explanation in order that we may be able to discuss the bill intelligently when it is brought in.

For example, it is stated that the new bill proposes to include certain veterans of the South African war. For one thing I should like the minister to explain what he means by "certain veterans." I should like an explanation of the word "certain." In the second place, I see that pretty well all those suffering from war disabilities are going to be looked after, but I see absolutely no mention of ex-prisoners of war. I thought perhaps the minister might make it clear whether it is the intention that veterans of that class shall be dealt with under this legislation.

Mr. MULOCK: We could discuss this bill more intelligently if we saw what it looked like. The minister has explained the purposes of the bill, and we can discuss its provisions when it is laid before us. We should give the minister an opportunity to introduce it, and in that way we might save time.

Mr. PELLETIER: I should like to have an answer to the question I asked. What does the minister mean by the word "certain?"

Mr. POWER: The moment this resolution passes I intend to ask for permission to introduce the bill, and it will be distributed. If my hon. friend will possess his soul in patience for another ten minutes we can get the bill introduced.

[Mr. A. E. McLean.]

Mr. TUSTIN: This resolution refers to the War Veterans' Allowance Act, and provides that veterans of the South African war may be looked after as well. But I do not see anything in the resolution with reference to nursing sisters. I should like to ask the minister whether nursing sisters are covered.

Mr. POWER: They will be included.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): There is a small class, not very numerous, that I think might be worthy of a little consideration. Men who did not serve in an actual theatre of war are not included under this measure, and I think that is quite correct. They did not suffer in the same way as the others did, but a number of nursing sisters who worked hard and perhaps had to bear a certain amount of risk are perhaps as deserving as those who actually served in a theatre of war. The only difference is that patients were brought to them; they did not go to the patients. Could the minister give a little consideration to this small class of very needy and very deserving veterans of the great war?

Mr. QUELCH: I am very much in favour of the general principle of this resolution, but I realize that from the point of view of the veterans the success of this measure is going to depend in large measure upon the sympathetic consideration that is given the applications by the war veterans' allowance board. I think we can safely say that in the past we have received fairly sympathetic consideration from that board, and if the same treatment is accorded in the future we can have every reason to believe that the bill will reach its objective. I wonder if the minister could tell me how many applications were made under the new class; that is, those over fifty-five years of age? How many applications were refused and how many were granted?

Mr. POWER: I have not that information at the moment, but I shall be glad to give it when the bill is in committee. Roughly speaking, however, I can say that about fifty per cent of the applications made for war veterans' allowances are granted, and I quite agree with my hon. friend that it throws a heavy burden on the discretion of the board.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Power thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 35, to amend the War Veterans' Allowance Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.