

petent to certify that he has served in a theatre of actual war. However, endeavouring to verify this is difficult and causes quite an amount of work, but in these cases we do give the benefit of the doubt.

In some cases I have been able to form a fairly serviceable liaison with a Russian veterans branch in Montreal which has been very helpful, and there are various ways in which we explore the accuracy of these statements—through the international Red Cross, and agencies like that. We do endeavour to ascertain in these ways whether or not they are eligible.

Mr. McINTOSH: Is it possible to break down the figure to which I referred a moment ago into commonwealth applicants and other allied forces?

Mr. CROMB: I am not sure whether this ties in, but I have a note here which states that 6,802 veterans and 3,651 widows of veterans of commonwealth forces are recipients.

Mr. McINTOSH: Six thousand odd? But the figure you gave us was only 1,200 altogether.

Mr. CROMB: I beg your pardon.

Mr. McINTOSH: The figure about which I am talking is the 1,289 figure.

Mr. CROMB: What I gave you was what Mr. Herridge asked for with regard to applications during the current year. If it is helpful to you I can give you the number of recipients at the present time. The number at the present time is 82,149 as of March 31, 1964. That represents an increase of 2,329 during that fiscal year and it includes 6,802 veterans and 3,651 widows of veterans of commonwealth forces. It includes also 1,670 veterans and 380 widows of veterans of other allied forces.

What I gave you before was the applications for which Mr. Herridge had asked.

Mr. LANIEL: For one year?

Mr. CROMB: For one year, yes.

Mr. CHATTERTON: There is obviously an anomalous situation with regard to merchant seamen who may be ineligible even though they live in Canada.

Mr. CROMB: Part 11 of the Civilian War Pensions and Allowance Act is just for Canadians or those who were domiciled in Canada.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Have you had applications for allied merchant seamen who have been here for 10 years and found they were ineligible?

Mr. CROMB: No, there are very few. It was never generally publicized that they would be eligible. This is just for Canadians and those who have served in Canadian ships.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Would the colonel not say that this is an anomalous position whereby Her Majesty's and allied forces are eligible if they have lived in Canada for 10 years, and merchant seamen are eligible but not allied forces seamen.

Mr. CROMB: The only thing, Mr. Chatterton, is that the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act was designed originally for Canadians; and Part II, which the war veterans' allowances board administers, was tacked on to it.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Let us hope that is one of the proposed amendments the minister will bring forward.

Mr. McINTOSH: I concur.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Mr. Chairman, I think I should say that in my experience the war veterans' allowances board is generally well considered by veterans' organizations—and I can say that for all of the members.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.