

*War Veterans' Allowance Act*

who preceded us have not found things so easy. I think this thought was best expressed in the words of that great statesman when he said that certain things were attained through blood, sweat and tears. Now in my opinion we have gained our inheritance through the blood of our warriors, the sweat of our pioneers and the tears of those who have had to undergo unnecessary hardships.

In listening to the debate yesterday I caught the phrase, "so long as we have veterans we will have problems." I think this is a significant phrase and I would put it this way: Many of us have no problems compared to the problems of these older veterans. Furthermore, if we did not have these veterans we would have many problems without the power to resolve them. We must also remember that the men in the first war brought this country to a state of nationhood. Many members will recall that years ago the prime minister of the day in attendance at The Hague was asked "Whom do you represent?" He answered "I represent 60,000 dead men." That was the beginning of Canada's nationhood.

In conclusion we should remember that all these veterans gave years of their lives willingly and those who took part in these wars knew not where they were going. No matter in what small way they served, to them it was their greatest hour.

While I am on my feet I should like to refer to a matter that has recently appeared in the press. I am pleased to say that a dear lady named Mrs. MacFarlane who comes from my home town of Truro has been named to lay a wreath as the representative of the Silver Cross mothers of Canada.

There is no person I know who is better qualified to do this. Mrs. MacFarlane lost her husband and three sons in two world wars, and I hope as people pause to remember our glorious dead they will also find a place in their hearts to keep in mind the living.

**Mr. T. J. Irwin (Burnaby-Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note that the minister is trying to live up to all the nice things that have been said about him. Since I came to this house I have not had the pleasure of making his acquaintance, but I have heard much of him in the past 10 years or so, and I realize that we have in this minister a man well versed in veterans affairs and, moreover, a man who is entirely sympathetic to the veterans cause.

I will repeat what I said the other day, that I would rather dream of the future than dwell on the history of the past. Thus it is that I am more interested in the minister's proposals and their implications than

in whatever he is alleged to have said in the past. After all, Mr. Speaker, we are told that by their fruits ye shall know them, and as time passes we shall find out whether the present minister is going to live up to all the nice things that have been said about him, and we sincerely hope that he shall continue to have the confidence of this house in so far as the cause of the veterans is concerned.

We have Bill No. 28 before us now, and it is a step in the right direction. I say this because it represents an injection of purchasing power, however small, into the hands of consumers, and Canada will benefit as a result. But Canada would have benefited to a much greater extent had the steps taken under this bill been longer and more generous.

I am still unable to comprehend why old age security should not be available to veterans in addition to war veterans allowance. Old age security is given by Canada to all of her citizens who have reached the age of 70, and is a recognition of their service to Canada based merely on the fact that they have lived in Canada for at least 10 years. Ex-servicemen and women have rendered a service to their country which is beyond normal. Their need has been recognized under this act now before us. This is an income predicated on an extraordinary service and in consequence it should not be utilized as a means to debar its recipients from receiving a dividend payable for a normal contribution to the welfare of our country.

I would point out to the minister that many persons eligible under this amendment to the act are already in receipt of old age assistance or old age security benefits. This passes responsibility to those provinces which are paying supplementary bonuses. This is a point arising in connection with this bill which has not heretofore been commented on. I am surprised that this should be the case because when this amendment comes into force those provinces which are paying supplementary pensions in respect of old age assistance and security are going to find that the dominion government is passing the buck in respect to those for whom the dominion government should be solely responsible.

The provinces of B.C. and Alberta, in particular, pay fairly high supplements. A war veteran now eligible will receive \$840 under this act at the present time. If he cannot earn any additional income, that is all a single veteran will get. That is it, period—\$840. Under the Old Age Assistance Act he will be eligible for \$660 plus the provincial bonus, which in the case of British Columbia would raise his income to \$900,