

Newfoundland

On section 38—*Veterans*.

Mr. Brooks: I assume that the minister will explain this section. Certain parts are not clear, and certain questions might be answered. Reference is made to hospitalization. The committee would like to know, for instance, what hospitals there are in Newfoundland at the present time for the accommodation of veterans; the number of pensioners in the island; and the probable number of those who might be eligible for the war veterans allowance. The section says that the Veterans' Land Act, the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Veterans Business and Professional Loans Act, and the Veterans Insurance Act will be extended to Newfoundland veterans who served in the second world war. As to the Veterans' Land Act, of course, I do not think there is any time limit within which veterans need to make application, but I am not sure about that. Under the Veterans Business and Professional Loans Act application in Canada must be made within five years. If we use the same act, I think it will have to be amended in some way so that the veterans in Newfoundland can make application within the necessary time. Section 38 says:

A re-establishment credit will be made available to Newfoundland veterans who served in the second world war . . .

That does not present much of a problem because under our act any veteran can apply for his re-establishment credit within ten years from the date of his discharge from the army. Since there are a number of years to run, the veterans of Newfoundland will have an opportunity to make application for this credit. I come next to the War Service Grants Act. I believe there is a time limit in which application must be made for the benefits under that act. Perhaps the minister will tell us what amendments will be necessary there. The committee might be interested in knowing what benefits were given to the Newfoundland veterans under the different veterans acts in that island.

Paragraph (e) of section 38 says:

Canada will assume, as from the date of union, the cost of vocational and educational training of Newfoundland veterans of the second world war on the same basis as if they had served in His Majesty's Canadian forces.

Canadian veterans made application for their educational and vocational grants within a certain period after they were discharged from the army. I believe the act states definitely that the applications must be made within fifteen months after the veteran is discharged. This of course is 1949 and the time in which the Newfoundland veteran could apply has expired. If the Newfoundland veteran is to be given the same advantages,

[Mr. Gillis.]

an amendment will have to be made to the act. I have no doubt that there are in Newfoundland many young veterans who have not taken advantage of any educational or vocational possibilities in their own country. Possibly there were none. There may be young men there who wish to go to university or wish to take vocational training. Is it the intention to give these men a full four or five years' educational or vocational training, as our veterans are receiving? I do not think there are any other matters on which I require explanation.

The Veterans Insurance Act will allow a veteran to apply for insurance at any time. There is no limit in that act. What arrangements are to be made to allow the Newfoundland veterans to apply for these different benefits?—because a time limit was placed in the different acts in Canada.

Mr. Gregg: If I miss answering any questions which my hon. friend asked, perhaps he will remind me of them. When the delegation was here last fall and met with myself and officers of my department, on a number of occasions they had with them, though not as part of the delegation, two representatives of the veterans organizations in Newfoundland. These men were brought to the meetings with the Department of Veterans Affairs. All matters were thoroughly and fully discussed. I think I can say that the main part of section 38 covers in a general way all the situations raised by my hon. friend. The section reads:

Canada will make available to Newfoundland veterans the following benefits, on the same basis as they are from time to time available to Canadian veterans, as if the Newfoundland veterans had served in His Majesty's Canadian forces, namely...

For the purpose of clarity the various items are detailed in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f). With regard to hospitalization, paragraph (vi) in the statement of questions raised by the Newfoundland delegation states:

The responsibility for hospitalization of veterans rests with the Canadian government. If it becomes apparent that a need for extra beds for veterans exists in Newfoundland, these will be provided through extension of existing facilities or new hospitals. The final decision in this respect will depend upon on-the-spot investigation.

We have received a good deal of information on existing facilities. We have not a clear-cut report on it yet. Therefore the key point is an on-the-spot investigation which will be carried out just as soon as this agreement is completed; but the principle involved is set out in the paragraph that I have read.

With regard to pensions, as hon. members know, in the first world war Newfoundland had in the main its own force or forces. There were some men who served in the