

Alexander Tells Of End Many Vet's Benefits

Editor Democrat:
During the past few days I have received numerous requests from our people in the Ninth District for information as to the effect of the President's Proclamation of January 1, 1955, terminating certain veteran benefits.

Realizing the concern of the thousands of veterans in our District over this matter, I have prepared a statement briefly outlining the provisions contained in the Proclamation, which I am enclosing. Of course, you may give this statement such publicity through your paper as you desire.

Sincerely,
Hugh Alexander
The Proclamation of the President issued on January 1, 1955, will have the effect indicated below:

Basic Service Period: Korean service, by the terms of the proclamation, has been officially set as on or after June 27, 1950, and through January 31, 1955.

Education and Training: Public Law 550 of the 82nd Congress authorizes 1 1/2 days of education or training for each day of service performed during this basic service period with a maximum of 36 calendar months of entitlement. The proclamation means that no additional eligibility may be accumulated under this law after January 31, 1955, and persons first entering service after such date acquire no eligibility for the benefits. The proclamation also ends eligibility for training under the vocational rehabilitation laws.

Compensation: Today disabled veterans of the Korean conflict are entitled to service-connected disability compensation ranging from \$17 per month for a 10-percent disability to \$181 per month for total disability. In certain severely disabled cases special rates may go as high as \$420 per month. Any veteran who has a service-connected disability as a result of service after January 31, 1955, will be entitled, as a peacetime veteran, to 80 percent of the rates mentioned previously. Certain presumptions of service connection in chronic disease cases will not be available to veterans separated from service after January 31, 1955. After that date eligibility for service-connected disability compensation will also be on a peacetime basis, with rates based on 80 per cent of the wartime rate.

Pensions: Veterans of World War I, II, and Korean today are entitled under certain conditions to non-service-connected disability pension at rates of \$66.16, \$78.75, or \$133.45, depending upon age, condition, and other factors. Service after the date of January 31, 1955, will be considered peacetime, but any veterans serving, for example, as little as 1 day prior to the delimiting date, and 89 ad-

ditional days continuously thereafter will be eligible for non-service-connected disability pension under the existing laws.

Widows and children of veterans of the Korean conflict period (June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955) are eligible for pension based upon the non-service-connected death of such veterans. The basic rate for a widow is \$50.40 per month. This program will not be available to dependents of persons first entering the service on or after February 1, 1955.

Automobile: Veterans of exclusive service after January 31, 1955, will not be eligible for the benefits of Public Law 187, 82nd Congress, which provides \$1,600 toward the purchase of a specially equipped automobile for service-connected veterans who have suffered the loss or loss of the use of one or both hands, or feet, or who are blind as defined.

Hospitalization: No entitlement to VA hospitalization for non-service-connected disabilities where the service of the veteran is solely after January 31, 1955.

Insurance: The proclamation does not affect in any way provisions of Public Law 23 which automatically insures any serviceman in the amount of \$10,000 while in active service. It is payable over a 10-year period to beneficiaries defined in the law.

Housing: The issuance of the proclamation means that in order for a veteran to obtain a loan guarantee, maximum \$7,500) the loan must be made prior to February 1, 1955. So long as there is service prior to January 31, 1955, additional service to complete the required 90 days may be had after that date, if continuous.

Mustering-Out Payments: Mustering-out payments in the amount of \$100, \$200, \$300, depending upon the length and place of service will no longer be available to veterans who serve exclusively after January 31, 1955.

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To Protest Parkway Toll

Washington—Sen. Shuford (D-N.C.) says congressmen from North Carolina and Virginia will protest a plan to charge admission to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

He also says he will suggest to Gov. Luther Hodges that the governor of the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development look into the matter.

Shuford, whose Mountain district includes part of the North Carolina portion of the 326-mile scenic drive which starts in Front Royal, Va., said last week the congressmen would protest to the Interior Department.

The department has jurisdiction over the National Park Service, which plans to charge \$1 for a 10-day permit, beginning May 1. Meanwhile, in Raleigh, North Carolina highway chairman A. H. Graham and Rep. Kelly E. Bennett of Swain voice disapproval of the plan.

Announcement of the toll plan was made by parkway superintendent Sam P. Weems, Bennett, chairman of the North Carolina National Park, Parkway and Forest Development Commission, said the commission opposes the plan.

Bennett added that he had written to Conrad L. Wirth, director of the National Park Service in Washington, expressing the hope that the commission might "continue to stress the importance of completing the parkway instead of diverting funds and efforts toward the collection of fees."

Graham said the Highway Commission "had always hoped that the parkway would be kept open and free for Tar Heels and visitors to the state." He added, "It will be the first toll charged on a public road in North Carolina, we are sorry to see our record of free services broken up."

Murihead Named Hospital Manager

Congressman Hugh Alexander announced today that Dr. Samuel J. Murihead has been appointed, effective January 15, 1955, as Manager of the Veterans Administration Hospital at Salisbury, N. C., to succeed Dr. Louis F. Verdel who recently retired. Dr. Murihead is at present Chief of Professional Services at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and will take over his new duties at Salisbury as soon as he can be relieved of his present duties.

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