

fit to go anywhere. He became a casualty as a result of training, and he is finding it difficult to prove his case. He is certainly in a bad condition.

The hon. member for Brantford City pointed out that it is possible that some of our troops will be fighting in the Aleutian islands or Alaska. It seems to me that if a man offers himself for active service and becomes a casualty while serving in Canada, he should be placed on an equal footing with the man who serves overseas. If anything happens to a man in industry he is taken care of, and properly so, by the workmen's compensation act, despite the fact that while working he may have received considerably more remuneration than is received by a soldier. I know the ministers have offered excuses in past years, but I have never yet been able to get it clear in my mind. This principle prevailed from approximately the outbreak of the war, until May, 1940, when an order in council was passed. I wonder if the minister and the government could not see fit to have this principle apply to all those who are on active service without having a deadline of service overseas?

Mr. RALSTON: This really is not in my bailiwick.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): It is closely linked with the minister's department and the Department of Pensions and National Health.

Mr. RALSTON: Whether or not the committee thinks it is sufficient, the reason for the line of demarcation is a simple one. As the committee knows, the so-called insurance principle is much wider than the principle of any other pension legislation. Under the insurance principle, if a man is disabled on service he is entitled to a pension. His disability may be entirely removed from army service; it might be something that would have happened to him in civil life, but if he is on service he would be entitled to a pension. I think the reason for the introduction of the insurance principle was that so many men were finding it difficult to prove the inception of their disability.

As the hon. member well knows, in the stress and strain of active warfare a man might report to a regimental aid post, and there would be no opportunity to make a record of what he had been treated for. He might get as far back as the field ambulance post without any report being made. Records might be destroyed, and the result was that many times it was difficult for a man to prove his case. He would have to rely on the evidence of comrades, who perhaps were not there

or who perhaps had become casualties themselves, in order to show the inception of his disability. Because there might be difficulties in getting evidence or there might be lack of evidence, due to no fault of the soldier himself, it was felt that, rather than putting on the soldier the burden of proof, the so-called insurance principle should apply and that if he had incurred disability under those conditions it might be presumed that the disability was due to service. That is the line, I understand, taken in the United States pension act. The provisions of their act are that the disability must be shown to have been suffered in the line of duty—I think those are the words of the act—and that is the principle which is adopted in regard to pensions in Canada. Here the chances are very much less of there being the same confusion and the same handicaps in the way of producing evidence with regard to the circumstances under which a man received his disability, and it was therefore felt that the principle of "in the line of duty" or "attributable to service" might properly apply. Very briefly, those are the reasons which I think cause the differentiation between the two classes of service. Under the act as it is now, I understand that there is a provision whereby any place can be declared a theatre of war.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I presume the pension board have some discretionary powers provided it can be proved that the disability occurred in actual training.

Mr. RALSTON: It is attributable to service if it can be proved that the disability was incurred generally in connection with training. But if it was purely a civilian accident or something of that sort which the man incurred in Canada, he is not pensionable.

Mr. NEILL: Suppose he takes T.B.?

Mr. RALSTON: It would be pretty easy, I think, for a man to show whether he took T.B. in Canada while on service and that he had reported it to his medical officer. The records would be there to bear out that the inception of the disease was in Canada and while he was on service. He would have full evidence with regard to the conditions under which he worked and as to his condition when he entered the army. It would therefore seem quite easily possible for the medical officer to show whether or not it was incurred in the line of duty, to use the expression in the United States pension act. It would be rather more difficult overseas, because very often a soldier did not report to his medical officer. It was sometimes considered not good soldiering to report, and the man would fight