

Mr. LALONDE: This is all tied to the principle that up to now has been in force, which limits the eligibility to veterans who served in a theatre of actual war. You will recall that when the amendment was presented three years ago making eligible a Canadian veteran who served for not less than 365 days in the United Kingdom, the reason given was that those Canadians served under conditions, especially in 1915 and 1916, I believe, that were just as appalling as the conditions under which some veterans served in the trenches. This is what the senior officers who served in World War I tell us. There was mention made especially of Salisbury Plain. This was the reason why, although England was not a theatre of war in World War I, the exception was made for a number of Canadians who had to endure conditions reasonably similar to the conditions the veterans who served in the front lines endured later on.

Mr. HERRIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I feel that Mr. Speakman is quite sound in his statement.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I feel that this being a Canadian act it should benefit Canadians first.

Mr. HERRIDGE: I think Mr. Speakman is morally right in his argument, and is quite sound. We know legally the act is being properly applied.

Mr. LALONDE: I must point out to Mr. Speakman that that is the way the act read originally. It was strictly a Canadian act. As a result of very strong pressure that developed over the years it became more than a Canadian act.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I am entirely sympathetic to all veterans but I am particularly sympathetic to our own Canadian veterans because I think they are, being Canadians, to be considered first.

Mr. ORMISTON: Mr. Chairman, I have a question in mind which is somewhat supplementary to the question asked by Mr. Speakman and the answer given by Mr. Garneau. He referred to the Polish, Belgian, Norwegian and Italian veterans. Surely there should be some distinction made between Italian veterans and Belgian and Polish veterans. Is it the insertion of the words—"powers associated with His Majesty—" which makes the Italian veteran eligible?

Mr. LALONDE: This does not apply to Italian veterans of World War II.

Mr. GARNEAU: Naturally the act eliminates the eligibility of an Italian veteran who served in the Italian forces during World War II. The Italian veterans I referred to are those who were allies during World War I.

Mr. HERRIDGE: I have one further question, Mr. Chairman. Could the committee members be assured that no veteran in Canada is receiving the war veterans allowance who served in the German army up to the armistice and later joined another allied army?

Mr. GARNEAU: I frankly do not recall any case, that we have knowledge of, of that kind. You have reference to the veteran who served in the German army during World War I?

Mr. HERRIDGE: I am referring to the veteran who served in that army during World War II.

Mr. GARNEAU: That situation is not possible. During World War I they were our enemies, and were our enemies as well during World War II; so there is no margin open for consideration for a German who served in the forces of the Reich during World War I or with Hitler's forces during World War II.

Mr. BROOME: I have one question in regard to this subject. I noticed that the wording has been changed. Previously it read—"with His Majesty in any war concluded—", and it now contains the added words "—or terminated".