

training) or to be placed in a lower category where they could be used for military non-combatant service. This set-up would relieve the pressure for the moment and the committee could then deal with future problems at their leisure—

To me that is a constructive suggestion, and I earnestly commend it to the attention of the minister because there is an emergency at the moment. The municipalities, both urban and rural, are not able to cope with the situation as well as they would like on account of these men being returned to the municipalities without any possible means of support. Therefore I would ask the minister if these matters are being considered by his department at the present time and if he intends to take any action in connection therewith.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I can assure my hon. friend that every single problem he has mentioned is being fully considered and discussed by one or more of these sub-committees at the present time, and I trust a full description of their activities will be given before a special committee of this house within the next week or two.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: I notice that the resolution extends the benefits of this act to certain persons serving in the forces of the United Kingdom. Whom has the minister in mind in that regard? Are there any particular persons or groups? And would he enumerate those included?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): That again was discussed this afternoon. It applies to all Canadians serving with the imperial forces who were domiciled in Canada at the time of the outbreak of the present war.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: The resolution also refers to dependents. I believe our experience with the Pension Act in the past would lead to the conclusion that one group of dependents has been seriously neglected. I am referring to the widows of war veterans of the last war. It seems to me that unless some change is made in this regard, the whole thing will be largely an empty gesture. A large part of the suffering it should alleviate will have been neglected. I hope, when the bill deals with the matter, those people will not be forgotten. If it is possible to change existing legislation so as to bring in those who are suffering because they have been excluded from pension schemes of the past, I trust those changes will be made.

Mr. HOMUTH: Is there any intention of amending our Pension Act so as to take care of imperial pensioners who are domiciled in Canada, or whose people are domiciled here? A great many imperial pensioners are living

in this country. It is most difficult to get any action from the imperial pension board. The application must come to Ottawa, and then must go forward to London. In my constituency there are some of these men who, in my opinion, have been unfairly treated. Their cases are, however, very difficult to handle. Surely there ought to be some way of setting up a joint board which might act in circumstances of this kind. We are in this war; we are partners with Great Britain in this war.

Many of our boys who, before the war, went overseas on cattle boats and lumber boats enlisted in the Royal Air Force on the outbreak of war. They have built up a fine name for themselves, and incidentally for Canada, because they are looked upon as Canadians. I wonder whether something could not be done to coordinate the work of the imperial and the Canadian pension boards, so that consideration might be given to those men, upon their return to Canada, better than was given to those who returned after the last war. Our standard of living is higher; our living costs are higher, and wages are higher. I believe something should be done to work out a scheme between the two countries whereby these men, upon their return, may be a little better off than they would be were they to receive only a pension from the old country.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): The question raised by the hon. member was raised this afternoon. I said at that time the committee would be glad indeed to discuss the whole situation with reference to imperial soldiers. Of course my hon. friend knows, if there is to be a coordinated arrangement there must be consent of both British and Canadian governments.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Mackenzie (Vancouver Centre) thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 17, to amend the Pension Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Mackenzie (Vancouver Centre) moves that the said bill be now read the second time.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): No, no; just a minute; not so fast. No one has asked for that.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Next sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Next sitting of the house.