

## Canada Prize Act

believed they were going to get a good thing out of whatever they captured. Such a practice really has no connection with our modern navy, army or air force. If it is a question of awarding it to the navy because of what they captured, then may I suggest that if there is one service which should be getting the prize money it is the Canadian army. Infantry and tanks captured a thousand times more real property than the navy.

There is a second point which I think is important today. It is the matter of trying to get consistent terms of service in the three branches of our armed forces. This is not a new thing with me. I remember at the time of the conscription debate in 1944 one of the reasons why the army had such trouble in getting recruits at the very time that the air force was turning them away was the fact that conditions of service in the air force had been made so attractive, mainly owing to the great interest taken by the former minister for air, the present member for Quebec South (Mr. Power). As a Canadian and a veteran I am glad to see the steps that have been taken since the war to provide the same conditions of service and the same rewards for service in each of the three branches. Without any authority from the air force association or anybody else I can say that no airman joined at the beginning of the war with the expectation of receiving prize money. I further say that not one Canadian in a thousand who joined the Canadian navy ever thought or expected to receive prize money. I would also say that the great rank and file of veterans who served either in the navy or in the air force think that the best place to put the money is in the benevolent funds in order to help those of our colleagues who may need assistance from that source. When I hear the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) making a suggestion of fraud I think he is getting very far from the feeling of the average man who was in the services with regard to this prize money.

The point I want to make is a little different. If the money is going to be turned over to the navy and air force benevolent funds for the use of naval and air force veterans who may need help, I think there is a direct obligation on the government and on parliament to exercise a little more scrutiny of the funds than is the case today. In the last two or three days I was a little shocked to read in a newspaper—I just cannot put my finger on it at the moment—a report of the R.C.A.F. benevolent fund. As I recall, in round figures the fund amounts to around \$2 million. Last year they paid out about \$50,000 in grants and loans to deserving air force veterans. The astounding thing, however,

is that the cost of administration was \$53,000. It may have been an error in the paper but if it cost \$53,000 to administer loans amounting to \$50,000 then the government had better take an active interest in the proceedings of this benevolent association before turning over this prize money.

**Mr. J. M. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to try to make a mountain of this matter but I cannot help expressing a word of regret because it seems to me, as has already been said, that we are dealing *ex post facto* with a situation which existed. I very much doubt that the minister will be able to assure us that no reference to prize money was made in the recruiting of navy personnel. I doubt very much that he could give such an assurance, and even if he did it is quite possible that a good many men, knowing the history of the navy, may have been induced to join by that as well as by other reasons.

**Mr. Sinclair:** That is putting a pretty low price on naval enlistment.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** No, I disagree with that entirely. I do not agree that there should not be a sort of element of sportsmanship in a thing which had a great element of risk in it anyway. As the hon. member pointed out so well, the army, about which as a former member of the air force he spoke so generously, had considerable opportunity as a matter of fact by private initiative to do a little collecting on its own, whereas those who were on the sea and in the air did not have much chance to do that. Speaking seriously again, I will not labour the point but I cannot help but say that I do not believe this is the proper way to handle it.

**Mr. Coldwell:** Did the hon. member say "private enterprise" or "private initiative"?

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Private initiative. I cannot forbear expressing some regret that we did not see fit to deal with this matter as they did in Great Britain where it seems, as so often is the case, they found a useful compromise.

**Mr. H. P. Cavers (Lincoln):** Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to inject myself into the debate but there have been certain remarks in connection with the bill about which I should like to say something. While I cannot speak for members of the Canadian navy I feel—and it is my experience that this is the view of those who were in that service—that few looked forward to prize money on enlistment. I feel that those who enlisted did so for a much higher purpose than obtaining prize money which might be theirs as the result of moneys in this fund. It seems to me also that many of