

Mr. FIELDING: I hesitate to express any dissent from the report of the committee when I know they have given long and patient consideration to each matter dealt with therein. Still I am sure the Chairman and members of the committee will accept any suggestions that are offered in the right spirit. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick—in fact in the Maritime Provinces generally, and I suppose it is true of other provinces—there are a very large number of people who have relatives in the United States. At one time, many years ago—when means of communication between this section of Canada and the lower provinces practically did not exist—all travel went from the lower provinces to the United States, and there are a large percentage of our population to-day who have relatives there. I have heard it said—I am not sure that it is not actually the case—that there are more Nova Scotians in the city of Boston than there are in the city of Halifax. Now if occasionally some widow who is receiving a pension under this generous arrangement—and it is in the main a generous arrangement; I agree with my hon. friend from North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt)—but if some widow finds it desirable for family reasons to go and live with her relative in the United States—she is not going to do that for any reason other than some good domestic reason, some reason that is going to minister to her comfort and happiness—if in such a case she sees fit to cross the border to live with her relative in the United States, upon my word I can see no reason why she should be penalized for doing so.

Mr. CALDER: It is not the case of a few odd individuals. As I have pointed out, there are somewhere in the neighbourhood of between three and five thousand widowed mothers now in the United States or Great Britain. There are more in the United States and Great Britain than in Canada; there are more outside of Canada than in Canada. Now I understand from the officers that the changes already made in our pension law represent an annual expenditure of \$2,400,000. That is the increase provided for by the changes now made in this section of the law.

Mr. NESBITT: For widowed mothers?

Mr. CALDER: Yes. Now, in the case of the widowed mother residing out of Canada, if she is not in receipt of an income it is not proposed to decrease her pension; she

[Mr. Nesbitt]

gets the full pension provided for. It is only in case she receives an income that is ascertainable that there is a deduction made under the provision of this section, providing she is living outside of Canada. Well now, I am told that if this section is altered and we strike out the phrase, "resides in Canada" it will mean a further addition to our expenditure of something in the neighbourhood of \$720,000 a year. These are figures that must be considered by the committee when they come to decide as to what should be done. I do not say that we should by any means take into account the question of dollars and cents. We should endeavour to do what is the right thing, and that was the attitude of the committee throughout the whole inquiry. They kept the question of dollars and cents completely to one side and they came to the conclusion to do the right and proper thing to all parties concerned in the case of these pensions.

Mr. McMASTER: Like my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding), I feel that it is an ungracious thing to differ from the committee who spent so much time and devoted so much thought and attention to this matter. But is there not a middle way in connection with these pensions to widowed mothers? If they have never lived in this country, I think a good deal might be said that when the scale of living in their own country is less costly than here a lesser pension might with equity be given; and that if they are living and have always lived in another country, let us say the United States, then we would not feel the same obligation towards them as we would towards those who are living among us. Would it be possible to find a middle way and so amend the law that widowed mothers who had previously to the enlistment of their sons resided in Canada should not have their pensions cut down, but if they had never lived in Canada that what is contemplated by the legislation as at present before the House might be continued?

Mr. POWER: Another point of view is that in 1916, 1917 and 1918 the Dominion spent enormous sums of money recruiting British-born soldiers in the United States. We went to the United States to get these men, and if their widowed mothers are living in that country, surely they should be placed on the same footing as widowed mothers in this country. At the time the Military Service Act was being put into