

feels keenly his present circumstances. Then, a second man, I am sorry to say, has been succeeded by one who did time. I am not raising the issue because men have done time and should therefore be precluded from re-establishing themselves, but I am saying that returned men are entitled to different treatment, not because I suggest it but because the statute says so. That is the reason. Do not for one moment think that I do not appreciate the difficulties the government faces. For instance, I do not believe that the Minister of Railways and Canals would for one moment sanction such conditions; but these are the facts. How they have developed, or how they have been brought about, is not for me at this time to discuss.

Then, I have another case which touches the Department of Railways and Canals. This is one affecting a man who had been working two or three years in the department. It is only fair to the hon. member for York North (Mr. Mulock) to say that this man might be classified as a temporary employee. However he had a position in the department, and had seen long service. He served in the South African war, in the Zulu war and in the great war. Before the war he was what might be described as a bridge man, and had been given a position of lesser importance on the Welland canal. However, only a few days ago he found himself deprived of that position and succeeded by one who had not any such creditable service. This man is very much incensed and resentful about it. I shall give the facts to the Minister of Railways and Canals because if I were to discuss the matter in the sense in which I should like to discuss it I might prejudice a position which I desire to assist.

Other cases have come to my attention during the session. Letters dealing with some of them have been brought down. One is in the far west, one is in the far east, and so on. But in connection with all these cases conditions develop, not because of a desire on the part of the government but because there is not an opportunity for the government to deal with every phase of a matter. That is what I desire to point out.

One of the men about whom I have spoken had worked for three years as leg operator at the Prescott elevator. From 1914 to 1919 he served in the great war, and has been replaced by a man whose name I shall not give, but who was convicted of robbing the mails and as a result served two years in the penitentiary. The man who succeeded the former employee is not a returned soldier. Another case to which I referred affects a man who had held a similar position at Prescott, and who has been replaced by one who was formerly convicted

and served a sentence. The last case to which I referred affects a man who served in the Canadian artillery and who was in the Zulu revolution. In 1912 he went to Natal and joined the Natal Light Horse.

Mr. DUPUIS: How old is he?

Mr. BENNETT: I do not know.

Mr. DUPUIS: Is he not about seventy years old?

Mr. BENNETT: No. There are men who have served their country continuously since 1900 who are not seventy years old. He was discharged in Hamilton early in July, 1919, and on April 11 of this year was replaced, through a patronage committee which did not have a returned man on it, by a single man without a war record.

Mr. DUPUIS: Is that the man on the Welland canal?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes. The minister to whom he has appealed has been making some investigation. In this instance the minister to whom the appeal has been made is the Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Power), not the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Howe). The minister has been making certain investigations, and there the matter stands.

There are large numbers of these Canadians to whom I might direct attention, but my doing so would serve no useful purpose because I desire only to describe conditions which I believe require the taking of two steps: (1) Where the action taken by a member has resulted in the loss of a position by a civil servant, such servant should have an opportunity for investigation if he denies the correctness of the allegations made, and (2) we should continue to give effect to the provisions in our law with respect to returned men. Particular care should be exercised in placing those who, not having served in the overseas forces violated the criminal laws of the country during the absence of those whose positions they have taken. I think that is not too strong a position to take. I trust that I may present this grievance before we proceed with supply, in order that the government may be advised as to what the conditions are. I feel sure they will take such steps as may be necessary to protect those who desire only what Sir Wilfrid Laurier described as the opportunity to be heard before they are deprived of their positions.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I shall not attempt to review what my right hon. friend