

not all of them, but as far as pensions are concerned their dependents are on the same footing as the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In all common sense, how could the Act not apply to men who were regarded as Canadian citizens with the authority of the Militia Department? My hon. friend the present Minister of Militia (Mr. Guthrie), and my hon. friend the ex-Minister of Militia (Mr. Mewburn), have stated that they were so regarded with the authority of the Minister of Militia. It was on September 27, 1917, that an Order in Council was passed authorizing Americans to come in here and recruit for the Polish battalion, at the request of the American Ambassador in Washington, and, in turn, I believe at the request of the Imperial Government. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that representations which we could not control have been made to these men, to the effect that if they enrolled and served with the Polish battalion they would be treated on the same footing as members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Mr. EDWARDS: Did they get the same pay?

Mr. BELAND: No.

Mr. EDWARDS: Then they could not have thought that they were to be treated the same as members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Mr. ARTHURS: There were certain members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, as stated by the hon. member for Renfrew (Mr. Pedlow), who left the Canadian Expeditionary Force to join the Polish battalion at Niagara. They stayed with that battalion for some days or weeks, and then raised the objection that their treatment was not what they expected, that their pay was not as high as that of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and they were allowed to rejoin the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Consequently, the argument made that these men were to get the same treatment as the men of the Canadian Expeditionary Force has no foundation in fact.

Mr. BELAND: They may not have been guaranteed the same rates officially. If that had been the case we would not have been pleading for them here to-day, because it would have been a matter of law. But to my mind it appears clear, at all events it is most probable that these men were left under the impression that they were to receive the same treatment as the men

[Mr. Beland.]

of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, if not in all respects, certainly as regards the pension to their dependents if they should fall.

Mr. MORPHY: Why did they not join the Canadian Expeditionary Force?

Mr. BELAND: That is a very proper question, and I shall answer it. If my hon. friend, who is an extremely reasonable man, had been placed in the position of the Poles, understanding the English language very imperfectly—

Mr. MORPHY: I am informed that that is not so, and I would like my hon. friend to take the responsibility for making that statement.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that that is not a question.

Mr. BELAND: I will answer the hon. member's question as to why they did not enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, if you have no objection, Mr. Speaker. I might say that my authority for the statement that the Poles were only imperfectly acquainted with the English language is the Minister of Militia, who so stated in this House only five minutes ago. It was because of that that they were allowed to join the Polish battalion. I would not claim for the Pole exactly the same treatment as was accorded to members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, I might not go as far as my hon. friend from Renfrew (Mr. Pedlow); but I do think that this country owes it to itself to care for the widows and dependent children of these men who fell in the war. Is it generally known that these men were paid at the rate of 5 cents a day while they served in the Polish Army? I think in all fairness we should give these men the benefit of the doubt. I am animated by a desire only to do justice to these men, not to give them favoured treatment at all. Let me read the clause in the Bill. By section 26 of chapter 62, an Act to amend the Pension Act, a new section—section 47 of that law is enacted. This new section reads:

When a person of the rank of Warrant Officer or of a higher rank in any of His Majesty's naval, military or air forces other than the naval, military, or air forces of Canada or when a person in the naval, military or air forces of one of His Majesty's Allies who was domiciled and resident in Canada at the beginning of the war has died during the war or thereafter as the result of a disability incurred during the war or demobilization and his widowed mother, widow or children have been awarded a smaller pension than they would have been entitled to under this Act in respect of his death, such