

Government. I would be the last one to deprive any Canadian citizen of whatever nationality he may be, of any gratuity and so forth that he should receive, but these men are in the same category as some 20,000 who came from the United States and went over to France.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Except that they are Canadians.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Does my hon. friend know that they are not being paid by the American Government?

Mr. MEWBURN: I do not know definitely, but I doubt very much if they are.

Mr. CRONYN: Mr. Speaker, as this is only a proposed amendment, may I say: this matter received the very fullest and most careful consideration by the committee. The committee was addressed by the hon. member for South Renfrew, and one of the members of the committee interested himself in the question. I do not think more could have been done to bring before us the main facts of the case. One other point is this. While these men are Canadian-born citizens, many thousands of other citizens of Canada—true it is that they may not all have been native-born citizens; some were; perhaps a majority were not—left to join the armies of France, Belgium, Italy—

Mr. NESBITT: Russia.

Mr. CRONYN: Russia, too. I remember that, two or three years ago when the Pension Committee was sitting in the museum building, the same question came before us, and the decision was that we could not extend to these men pension provisions or gratuities. It is true that we provided for pensions for certain of their dependents.

Mr. NESBITT: Widows.

Mr. CRONYN: Widows. I understand from the hon. member for Renfrew South (Mr. Pedlow)—I may be wrong—that these 200-odd Poles were unmarried; they did not leave widows. We have also provided for a certain amount of medical treatment for men from the armies named, but on the distinct understanding, an understanding which has, I believe, been carried out, that our expenditure in that respect will be repaid by the French and other Governments concerned. Once again, I say that the committee considered this matter and it would be quite useless to send it back for reconsideration.

Hon. H. S. BELAND (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I want to add just a few words to what has already been said on this subject, which is of some importance. As the worthy chairman (Mr. Cronyn) has stated, the matter has been brought to the attention of the committee. I was unable to see eye to eye with the majority of the committee on this subject. I would like to impress upon the House a couple of propositions which should appeal, I think, to the majority of hon. members. First, the Poles referred to were, and are still, Canadian citizens. Second, they have served the common cause of the Allies during this war. And third, as to their quality, their bravery, and their devotion to the Allies' cause, we have the tribute which was paid to them by Professor Le Pan of the University of Toronto, if I mistake not. I say that these men are Canadian citizens. What did we do as a Government in the case of the French reservists, the Belgian reservists, and the Italian reservists, who lived in Canada and joined the armies of their respective countries and returned to Canada after their discharge? As far as pensions are concerned, we treated them on the same footing as the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Mr. CRONYN: I am quite sure that my hon. friend is mistaken in making that statement. I have under my hand a statement from the Pensions Board, on my inquiry, showing that Canada pays no pension to the disabled Belgian, French or Italian reservist who returned to Canada from overseas.

Mr. BELAND: I may be mistaken as to a disability pension to the soldier himself, but there is a clause in the Act providing that the dependents of the French, the Belgian and the Italian reservists, and I think the reservist of any of the Allied armies, should receive a pension, if the soldier fell, on the same footing as the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Mr. COOPER: No.

Mr. BELAND: May I ask the hon. member who says "no," what our Pension Act provides for the dependents of the Belgian, the French, and the Italian reservist? If it is not a pension for the dependents, is it a pension for the disabled soldier? Is it a war service gratuity that is provided? Or a bonus? Are they paid the same rate as the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force? Possibly