

Newfoundland

Mr. Pearkes: What is the position of a Canadian who may have been living in Newfoundland for twelve months but who up to now has not been entitled to a war veterans allowance? Is he going to be entitled to a war veterans allowance now that Newfoundland has been brought into confederation? Surely it must be a reciprocal agreement.

What about the Newfoundlander who instead of going to Nova Scotia went to the United States, worked there for a year and then left the United States to join the Royal Navy? He could not join a Royal Newfoundland navy, because there was no such thing. Are you going to draw a distinction? Are you going to say that the Newfoundlander or the Canadian who left Newfoundland or Canada to go to live in the United States or the United Kingdom twelve months before the outbreak of the war is not to be entitled to a war veterans allowance until perhaps some time when we see fit to ask the United Kingdom if they would like to join confederation?

I think we are going to ridiculous extremes. It is time for us to say that any man who was domiciled in Canada and who served in any force of His Majesty should be entitled to the benefits of the War Veterans Allowance Act, whether or not he had lived in Canada or in Newfoundland for the six or twelve months immediately before the outbreak of the war. This applies particularly to those Newfoundlanders who had left Newfoundland for a period of time, as has been pointed out already, in order to take temporary employment somewhere else, who served with the imperial forces, and who came back to live in Newfoundland or in Canada.

Here is a grand opportunity for the government to bring in an amendment to the War Veterans Allowance Act, which has been long overdue, to provide that any man who was domiciled in Canada and who served in the forces of His Majesty shall be entitled to war veterans allowance. That is one class.

The hon. member for Cape Breton South has referred to the man who served with the imperial forces. Many men of the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force or other imperial units, who served side by side with Newfoundlanders or Canadians and heard of the advantages of Newfoundland or Canada, decided to move to Newfoundland or Canada after the war. For the past twenty years or more those men have been residing either in Newfoundland or Canada. I have pleaded the case of these imperial veterans many times in this house and I hope the opportunity will now be taken to include them in the benefits which accrue under the War Veterans Allowance Act.

There is another comment I should like to make with regard to the application of the

War Veterans Allowance Act to the men of Newfoundland. I am told that to a large extent the veterans in Newfoundland own their own homes. A veteran, be it in Canada or in Newfoundland, is entitled to own property valued up to \$4,000 and still be eligible for a war veterans allowance. But if for any reason that man should sell his property and put the \$4,000 into an annuity or government bonds, he is immediately deprived of that benefit. Quite frequently because of changed circumstances, perhaps the death of a wife or something like that, a man may decide to sell his home and place the money in bonds for the time being in the hope that at some future time he will be able to purchase a new home. That man finds himself cut off from the war veterans allowance. The officials who administer the War Veterans Allowance Act are governed by the regulations and they must tell that man that he cannot draw a war veterans allowance until his liquid assets have been reduced to \$1,000.

That man must live on his meagre capital derived from the sale of his house until it has been reduced to \$1,000. When he reaches that point he loses all possible hope of ever being able to purchase a home of his own. The recipient of a war veterans allowance is permitted to have casual earnings or independent income up to \$125 per year, but if the man who sells his home puts the \$4,000 into bonds the interest would be less than that.

This is another amendment which is urgently needed in view of the fact that many veterans in Newfoundland own their own homes. Having disposed of their home it may be that they want to put the money into some form of government bond. They will be told: "You cannot draw the war veterans allowance now; you have got to wait until you have used your capital, until your liquid assets are reduced to \$1,000". I ask the minister to give the most serious consideration to those three points. The first point is to make the benefits of the war veterans allowance available to every man who has been domiciled at any time in Canada or in Newfoundland, who has served in any of His Majesty's forces and has returned either to Newfoundland or to Canada. Secondly, I would ask him to take the opportunity now of including all our comrades who served in the imperial forces, and who have lived in Canada or Newfoundland for a period of twenty years or more. The third point I wish him to give consideration to is the heartbreaking regulation which forces a recipient of the war veterans allowance to live on his capital until it has been reduced to \$1,000.

Mr. Gregg: I am sure the hon. members for Nanaimo and Cape Breton South will not