

EXPEDITIONARY FORCES VOTING BILL.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM.

THE object of this Bill is to insure that all members of the Expeditionary Forces who may be in New Zealand at the date of the next general election shall be entitled to vote at that election and at the licensing poll to be held simultaneously therewith, notwithstanding that they may not have been registered as electors under the Legislature Act, 1908. The Bill applies only to members of an Expeditionary Force who have been beyond the seas and who have not been discharged before the 31st August, 1919. It is assumed that all members discharged prior to the 31st August, 1919, will be duly enrolled as electors.

Clause 2 defines the term "recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force."

Clause 3 declares the right of all recently returned members of an Expeditionary Force to vote at the next general election and licensing poll.

Clause 4 makes special provision with respect to the recording of the votes of recently returned members of an Expeditionary Force. With respect to members who are enrolled as electors it provides—

- (1.) That they may vote in the district for which they are registered in all respects as ordinary electors; or
- (2.) That they may vote outside that district on production of evidence of their qualifications.

With respect to members who are not enrolled as electors it provides that they may vote as electors of—

- (1.) The electoral district in which they were resident immediately before becoming members of the Expeditionary Force; or
- (2.) Any electoral district in which they may have resided for not less than one month since their return to New Zealand.

Any person qualified to vote under the Bill may vote in any part of New Zealand without requiring to produce an absent voter's permit.

Clause 5 requires that every person who is not registered as an elector shall produce to the Deputy Returning Officer sufficient documentary evidence of the fact that he is a recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force within the meaning of the Bill.

Clause 6 directs the Returning Officer to take steps after the completion of the election to secure the enrolment of all persons who have voted under the Bill and who are not registered as electors.

Clause 7 is a direction to Deputy Returning Officers to issue voting-papers on application by persons entitled to vote under the Bill.

Clause 8 confers on members of the Expeditionary Forces who have not attained the age of twenty-one years the right to vote and also to be registered as electors. It also saves with respect to members of the Expeditionary Forces the provisions of section 38 of the principal Act (relating to the disfranchisement of public defaulters and others).

Clause 9 validates any irregularities that may occur at the election with respect to the votes of members of the Expeditionary Forces.

Clause 10 applies the provisions of the Act to any by-elections that may be held after the next general election and before the expiration of six months after the passing of the Act.

Right Hon. Mr. Massey.

EXPEDITIONARY FORCES VOTING.

ANALYSIS.

<p>Title.</p> <p>1. Short Title.</p> <p>2. Interpretation.</p> <p>3. Members of Expeditionary Force qualified to vote at general election of members of Parliament and at licensing poll.</p> <p>4. Districts for which vote may be exercised by members of Expeditionary Force.</p> <p>5. Members to produce evidence of qualification before voting.</p>	<p>6. Steps to be taken to secure enrolment of voters who are not registered as electors.</p> <p>7. Application of provisions of Legislature Act, 1908, as to absent voters' permits.</p> <p>8. Limitation of rights conferred on members of Expeditionary Force by this Act.</p> <p>9. Validity of elections or of licensing poll not affected by anything done under this Act.</p> <p>10. Application of this Act to by-elections held after the general election and within six months after the passing of this Act.</p>
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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to make Special Provision to preserve the Electoral Rights of Members of Expeditionary Forces for Purposes of the next General Election and Licensing Poll. Title.

5 BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the Expeditionary Forces Voting Act, 1919, and shall be read together with and deemed part of the 10 Legislature Act, 1908. Short Title.

2. For the purposes of this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the expression "recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force" means any person who has served beyond the seas as a member of an Expeditionary Force under the Expeditionary Forces Act, 1915, and who still remained a member of any 15 such Force on the thirty-first day of August, nineteen hundred and nineteen. Interpretation.

3. Every recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force who is in New Zealand at the date of the general election of 20 members of Parliament to be held next after the passing of this Act shall be qualified to vote at that election and at the licensing poll to be taken simultaneously therewith, whether he is registered as an elector of an electoral district or not. Members of Expeditionary Force qualified to vote at general election of member of Parliament and at licensing poll.

Districts for which
vote may be
exercised by
members of
Expeditionary
Force.

4. (1.) Every person qualified as aforesaid to vote at the next general election and licensing poll who is registered as an elector of any district shall vote as an elector of that district, and not otherwise, but may vote in any part of New Zealand outside the boundaries of that electoral district without an absent voter's permit. 5

(2.) Every person qualified to vote as aforesaid who is not registered as an elector of any electoral district shall, on making application in writing in that behalf, be entitled to vote as an elector of—

(a.) The electoral district (as existing at the date of the election) 10
in which is situated his place of residence immediately
prior to his first becoming a member of an Expeditionary
Force; or

(b.) Any electoral district (as existing at the said date) in which 15
he has resided for not less than one month since his
last return to New Zealand after service beyond the seas;
and may vote in any part of New Zealand outside the boundaries of
such electoral district without an absent voter's permit.

Members to produce
evidence of
qualification before
voting.

5. (1.) Every person who, not being registered as an elector of 20
any electoral district, applies for a voting-paper on the grounds that
he is entitled to vote as a recently returned member of an Expedi-
tionary Force under the foregoing provisions of this Act, or who,
being registered as an elector of an electoral district, desires to vote
outside the boundaries of that district as a recently returned member 25
of an Expeditionary Force pursuant to the provisions of this Act
in that behalf, shall, before receiving a voting-paper, produce to
the Deputy Returning Officer a leave-certificate or other status-
certificate issued by a competent military authority, or a certificate
of discharge dated not earlier than the first day of September, 30
nineteen hundred and nineteen, or other documentary evidence
sufficient to satisfy the Deputy Returning Officer that he is a
recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force within the
meaning and for the purposes of this Act.

(2.) The Deputy Returning Officer shall, before returning any 35
certificate or other document as aforesaid to the applicant, place
thereon his official mark and his initials, and, in cases where the
elector has voted as an elector of a district other than the district
within which he has voted, shall also enter thereon the name of such
first-mentioned district.

Steps to be taken to
secure enrolment of
voters who are not
registered as
electors.

6. After the close of the election the Returning Officer shall 40
forward to the Registrar of the district for which any person not
registered as an elector has voted under this Act that person's
application for a voting-paper, and the Registrar shall thereupon take
all necessary steps to satisfy himself that such person is qualified to
be registered as an elector of the district, and to register him as an 45
elector accordingly.

Application of
provisions of
Legislature Act,
1908, as to absent
voters' permits.

7. Where application is made by a recently returned member of 50
an Expeditionary Force to vote under this Act as an elector of any
district other than the district within which he wishes to vote,
voting-papers for the election of a member of Parliament for the
first-mentioned district and for the licensing poll shall be issued to
him as if he were the holder of a voting-permit issued under section

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forty of the Legislature Amendment Act, 1910, and in any such case the voting-papers shall be dealt with in the same manner, as nearly as may be, as if they had been issued pursuant to a voting-permit.

5 8. (1.) Nothing in this Act shall entitle any person to vote as a recently returned member of an Expeditionary Force if such person is disqualified from being registered as an elector on any of the grounds mentioned in section thirty-eight of the Legislature Act, 1908, but no person who has served beyond the seas as a member of
10 an Expeditionary Force shall be disqualified from voting or from being registered as an elector on the ground that he has not attained the age of twenty-one years.

Limitation of rights conferred on members of Expeditionary Force by this Act.

(2.) Nothing in this Act shall affect the operation of the Expeditionary Forces Amendment Act, 1918, with respect to military
15 defaulters.

9. The validity of any election or of the licensing poll shall not be questioned on the ground that anything required to be done by this Act has been irregularly done, or has been omitted to be done, or that any person who has voted under this Act was not entitled
20 to vote.

Validity of elections or of licensing poll not affected by anything done under this Act.

10. The foregoing provisions of this Act shall, with the necessary modifications, apply to any election of a member of Parliament held after the next general election of members of Parliament and before the expiration of six months after the passing
25 of this Act in the same manner as they apply to that general election.

Application of this Act to by-elections held after the general election and within six months after the passing of this Act.