

some of them have been released, but it was found necessary, I believe, to prevent discharge by purchase in order to maintain the efficiency of the force.

While men in garrison have duties to perform awaiting attacks, it may also be truthfully said that they are awaiting raids and attacks which we hope will never happen. Take for instance, the case of Gibraltar and Malta, where men are performing duties of the highest order, but it is always hoped that there will never be an attack against either Gibraltar or Malta that will necessitate calling the military activities of these men into service.

With regard to the report of Commissioner Perry, hon. gentlemen will remember that it was suggested that the provincial forces were established purely for political purposes, and quite a controversy took place in the newspapers as to whether the provinces would be better protected with a police force of their own. Most people, however, thought it better to increase the force of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and maintain the arrangement between the Dominion and the provinces. But the provincial legislatures met and authorized the establishment of provincial forces. It was contended, and not improperly it seems to me, that with the passage of prohibitory legislation in the two western provinces a burden was put upon the mounted police of what might be called domestic police duty that interfered with their usefulness in the larger sphere of the preservation of order and respect for constituted authority which their uniform has always impressed on a new population. It was not in accord with the eternal fitness of things that those who were charged with maintaining that respect and reverence for constituted authority that always should be maintained in the midst of our new population, should have at the same time to go out and search for a quart of beer or a pint of whisky that might be brought into localities in contravention of the law. That was the paramount factor, I believe, that influenced the mind of the provincial legislatures in passing the necessary legislation to bring into being a provincial force.

Mr. KNOWLES: Is it not the case in Alberta, as it is in Saskatchewan, that the provincial Governments appointed their own police to enforce liquor legislation?

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: In our province no force had been created especially for that purpose up to the time the new force came into being, but I am aware that in Sas-

katchewan they did find it necessary to appoint such officers to give effect to the prohibitory legislation. Nevertheless, large duties were still cast on the mounted police and I remember seeing communications that came from some of them, objecting to that course being followed, because they thought it placed them in an invidious position and lessened the authority with which they could maintain respect for law and order in districts newly settled by those who came from foreign countries. I think that, on investigation, my hon. friend will find that most of the mounted police in the West are pretty active, and that those who are not so are at least men of non-military age. I have in mind now the case of several men who are over fifty, who have been unable to leave the force, but they will be allowed to leave this year. They have been over twenty years in the force and are entitled to a pension. I have always felt that it was a very great mistake to dissociate the maintenance of law and order in the provinces from the mounted police, except with respect to the liquor traffic, and I had always hoped that we might be able ultimately to absorb the forces in the provinces. For the great traditions that lie behind that force give it an incomparable place, it seems to me, in the life of the country; the scarlet uniform of these men—and it is the only scarlet uniform left in Canada, or that you see at least in days like these—impresses the newcomer to our land as no other thing can, in converting him to the idea that however new may be the country and however sparse the population, reverence for constituted authority and respect for the law will be maintained at any cost. Just this week a trial is proceeding at Edmonton of two Eskimo charged with murdering two priests. These men have been brought thousands of miles to Edmonton with infinite toil and at no small expense by the Royal Northwest Mounted Police to answer for an offence with respect to which there was little evidence, but which they have been able to unravel after months and months of weary toil.

Mr. KNOWLES: I wish to explain what I said. I was not making any criticism because the change was made some months ago. I have no doubt it was done in good faith. I said the problem existed; I did not pass an opinion on it. My hon. friend says that his experience is different from mine as to whether the men are busy or not. I do not earmark my information as applying to Moosejaw only, for I have been