

that should be checked. Within the last three months quite a few young boys have gone to the trenches in the Belgian theatre of war too soon. I am not going to give any specific examples, but I have had examples given to me of men who have been killed in Belgium four months from the time they enlisted in Canada as general personnel. Of course that can happen in many ways. It could be an isolated case. There might be half a dozen isolated cases of boys being slipped into the reinforcement stream because they volunteered. They may have been asked because the ranks had to be filled. One can understand that it may happen in one or two cases, but it does not excuse the reinforcement officer who permits it to happen.

Mr. RALSTON: Did my hon. friend say only four months?

Mr. GILLIS: Yes.

Mr. RALSTON: Would the general permit me to say this? Would the hon. member give the name to the Minister of National Defence and I am sure he would look it up.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I think it is most unlikely unless the soldier had some military training beforehand.

Mr. GILLIS: No.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: We have the training record down to individuals. If we had the name the history of the matter could be traced and we could give you the specific information. No harm can come to the man by his name being given.

Mr. GILLIS: Certainly not.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I think Colonel Ralston and myself are most interested in having that information. If there is anything wrong we can check and audit on the stream.

Mr. GILLIS: Yes. I have no hesitation in saying that it may be an isolated case. I would say that the individual I refer to slipped into the reinforcement stream by volunteering. I can give you many others who were wounded. I have had many people come to me within the last couple of months and ask me: Is this possible, or is it reasonable, or is this the system? I know that in my end of the country these boys are put through too quickly. I can give names.

Mr. RALSTON: May I say this in the presence of the general? I had referred to me by a mother what I thought was a very bad case, just before I went overseas. She claimed that the boy had enlisted in January and had been wounded in July I think, and further that he was under age. I was very much con-

cerned about it. I said that I would see the boy when I was overseas. I did. I had him come up from the hospital to see me. I had thought it was a case of pressure—short-cut training, to put it bluntly. I went over his training with him myself first and asked what he was given, particularly his weapons training. It sounded as though he had had apparently good training both in Canada and in England. Then I sent for his papers. His record of training was such as would make any director of training proud. The record showed his basic training in Canada, the hours that he had spent on each particular subject, then his advanced training, his Bren gun, mortar, tommy gun and all other weapon training, with good reports as well on the rest of the syllabus. It gave the number of hours of training, the number of rounds fired with the different weapons and so on. It also gave the refresher training in England. It was as complete a record as I ever saw. This was a report of his training and I was very much gratified with it. I then asked the boy how old he was. He said he was eighteen and a half years. That was in July. I said: "What did you say your age was when you enlisted?" He said: "I told them I was nineteen." I said: "Did your mother say anything about your enlisting?" He said: "No. I went home on embarkation leave and she was sorry but she did not make any objection." He had been wounded at eighteen and a half. He will not be nineteen until December, and of course I gave instructions that he was not to return to his unit before that time. But that was a clean case. I just happened to get the name; I got the boy; I got the age and I got all the documents, and it was a perfect situation, except for one thing that people would say that fellow was pretty young to go in six months after he enlisted. That is all that could be said about that case. I know there are other cases. I have investigated quite a number. Generally if you look up the individual record you will find that the training has met the standards, and from the point of view of the requirements of the training regulations and the procedure which is laid down everything has been regularly observed. I wish to know if there are any cases where a man has been trained for four months only. I should like that for my own information. Can I have the figures on that?

Mr. GILLIS: I should like to be sure about the syllabus of training for the new personnel coming in; is it sixteen weeks?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The basic training is eight weeks, and the corps training runs from eight weeks in the infantry to sixteen weeks in the armoured corps.