

Reinforcements

to appear on the floor of the house and make a statement and be subject to questioning after the statement has been made. Before General McNaughton is asked to appear on the floor I desire to read to the house an order in council which sets forth the policy of the government with respect to the extension of service of N.R.M.A. personnel, which order is P.C. 8891, and has been approved by His Excellency the Governor General to-day.

At the Government House at Ottawa
Thursday, the 23rd day of November, 1944.

Present:

His Excellency

The Governor General in Council:

Whereas it is essential in the national interest and for the efficient prosecution of the war to provide for the adequate reinforcement of the Canadian forces overseas;

And whereas it has now become necessary, in order to ensure provision of adequate reserves to meet requirements for the reinforcement of the Canadian forces fighting in Europe and in the Mediterranean, to extend the locality of service of certain personnel who have been called out for training, service or duty, pursuant to the provisions of the National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940;

Now therefore, His Excellency the Governor General in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister of National Defence and under and by virtue of the provisions of the National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940, and the War Measures Act, is pleased to order and doth hereby order as follows:

Notwithstanding the provisions of any other statute, law, regulation or order, the Minister of National Defence is hereby authorized and directed to dispatch to the following localities of service, namely: the United Kingdom and/or to European and/or Mediterranean operational theatres such personnel, in such numbers as may be approved by the governor in council (the number hereby approved being sixteen thousand) who are serving by reason of their having been called out for training, service or duty pursuant to the provisions of the National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940, as are or may from time to time hereafter be required, in the opinion of the said minister, for training, service or duty within the said localities of service; such personnel to be detailed from such units, depots and establishments as may be designated by the said minister; and the Minister of National Defence is hereby authorized and directed to issue or cause to be issued all orders and to take all steps necessary to give effect to this authorization and direction; and all personnel so dispatched or to be dispatched are respectively hereby required (in addition to all other obligations for training, service or duty) to perform while in the said localities of service such training, service or duty as may be ordered by any superior officer.

Further, all personnel so dispatched or who may at any time be dispatched are, pursuant to section 64 of the Militia Act, hereby placed on active service beyond Canada for the defence thereof.

A. D. P. Heeney,

Clerk of the Privy Council.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

I ask the permission of the house to table a certified copy of this order which has been approved to-day.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Surrender.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. From the remarks that have been made by the Prime Minister I take it it is the unanimous wish of the house that the Minister of National Defence shall appear now.

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): May I continue with what I said yesterday with respect to this matter? The Prime Minister indicated a few moments ago that consent had been given. I think I would be less than frank if I did not indicate that there were certain observations that should be made before consent is actually given by the house.

I wish to make our position clear in this matter. Yesterday I mentioned that this question might be bound up with the question of secrecy. Our party are unalterably opposed to any part of this session being conducted in secret, and I so indicated to the Prime Minister yesterday. We feel that any deliberations or any arguments that may be advanced from time to time by any minister of the crown or anyone testifying before a committee or in this house should place sufficient facts in the open to enable the members of parliament and the people of the country to form their judgment. If there were secrecy in this chamber it would perhaps give us a prior right over those who ought to know what is going on, and we are opposed to that. I am hopeful that the Prime Minister will not press it at any time General McNaughton is giving his report.

We are very anxious to hear General McNaughton. We are glad to extend our whole-hearted consent to his coming before this house. I understand however that in matters of this kind it has always been agreed that there shall be one sitting only, or a meeting for one day, as the case may be. Because of the irregularity of the proceedings, when General McNaughton comes in we are anxious that this shall not be simply a general meeting lasting for some days but rather that it shall be an orderly presentation of the facts by the Minister of National Defence and that we shall finish it up to-day. It is hoped that in accordance with the motion which the Prime Minister has on the order paper we shall have an opportunity to commence the debate to-morrow upon those premises. We