

Now I want to draw attention to another matter of great importance and serious character in connection with our armed forces at the present time. I am going back to 1914. At the outbreak of the war in 1914 the highest rank obtainable in either the permanent or the non-permanent force was that of Colonel. I know of only two exceptions to this rule. Permanent force officers commanding districts held the rank of Colonel, and officers heading departments of military administration at Ottawa held the same rank. Non-permanent force officers commanding brigades, and other appointments also, reached the rank of Colonel. In other words, the rank of Colonel was the highest that could be obtained in the permanent or the non-permanent force at the outbreak of the war in 1914.

When the question of the command of infantry brigades in the First Canadian Division arose, Sir Sam Hughes appointed Colonels Currie, Turner and Mercer, all of whom were non-permanent officers. When the war ended Currie was commanding the corps. The first and second divisions were commanded by Macdonell and Burstall, permanent force officers, and the third and fourth divisions were commanded by Lomas and Watson, non-permanent force officers.

After the conclusion of the last war, and upon reorganization of the forces, the practice arose of conferring the rank of Brigadier, which is the equivalent of Brigadier-General, upon permanent force officers commanding districts, and the rank of Major-General was conferred upon such officers as were appointed to the head of a branch at Ottawa. As a result, there are in the permanent force to-day from five to seven Major-Generals and from twelve to fourteen Brigadiers; but no rank higher than that of Colonel is held by non-permanent force officers.

Apart from what I have been able to pick up on the street, I have no information whatever as to the mobilization plans of the Government, but I am given to understand that the military policy of the Government will be to give all senior commands and senior staff appointments in any expeditionary force which may be formed to officers of the permanent force. I object to this policy. It is to be remembered that the permanent force is an instructor-finding force; that it is to some extent a staff-finding force; that it has been used in peace times to furnish aid to the civil power in police work. On the other hand, the non-permanent force is the army of Canada. In peace time it outnumbers the permanent force by not less than ten to one, and in war-time it will outnumber that force by fifty to one. It is essential for the self-respect and

morale of the non-permanent force that officers who enter that service shall have open to them the promise of attainment of the highest rank or appointment in our military service. It is also to be assumed that in the ranks of our non-permanent force officers to-day, there are, as there were in 1914, men of genius and capacity who are the equal of any professional soldiers to be found anywhere. If I am correctly informed, it is the military policy of the Government, at least to begin with, to give all commands and senior appointments to officers of the permanent force, and to relegate the officers of the non-permanent force to distinctly subordinate positions. The opportunity or possibility of developing the capacity for higher leadership, which must exist in our non-permanent force, though perhaps at the moment not disclosed, will be overlooked. In other words, if the policy which is about to be adopted had been put into effect in 1914 you would never have heard of Sir Arthur Currie, Sir Richard Turner, Sir David Watson, Sir Frederick Lomas, or a score of non-permanent officers who distinguished themselves and rose to high position in the war.

The history or experience of military effort in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa does not support the condition that the permanent force officer is inherently the best type of officer to command the forces of these Dominions. I make the statement, supported by ample evidence, that the non-professional soldier is best led and directed by the non-professional officer. That is easy enough to understand. The non-professional soldier is taken from civilian life. He is taught as much as you can teach him, but he has to be handled in a certain fashion, and the knowledge of how to handle him is possessed in larger measure by the officer of his own type than by the professional soldier. That is a fact to which all officers present will witness. I say it is a provable thing. In point of fact, in Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, the non-permanent force officers are kept on terms of parity throughout with the permanent force officers, and at this moment higher commands in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa are in the hands of officers of the non-permanent forces. The permanent force officers are used for staff duties of various kinds. In Australia the particular duty of the permanent force officer is mobilization and training, and legislation there requires that officers of the permanent forces commanding base depots shall remain in the discharge of those duties.