

War Appropriation

by 15,000 than the total for the whole duration of the last war. Quebec military district has the honour of ranking fourth in the recent volunteer recruiting campaign, being surpassed only by Saint John, N.B., Halifax, N.S., and Winnipeg. It made a better showing than the three military districts of Ontario and those of Saskatchewan and Alberta, even of British Columbia. Quebec's percentage of the quota allotted was 122 per cent; at London, Ontario, the rating was 73 per cent, and at Victoria, B.C., 61 per cent.

Small wonder, then, that after a rapid inspection of the military camps, air fields and war industries of Quebec province, the British high commissioner to Canada, Right Honourable Malcolm MacDonald, should have said: "In the first place I congratulate Quebec in going over the top in the recruitment of men for the active service."

. . . . *LeDevoir*, over the signature of Emile Benoist, a former president of the press gallery, commented as follows on this intolerable situation:

"For month after month, ever since the war began, French newspapers, not only in Quebec but in the other provinces, too, have called for the recruiting of French-Canadian regiments outside Quebec province. Nothing was done about it. On the contrary, we have seen Quebec regiments, which we have always considered to be French-Canadian regiments, become mixed units to which Anglo-Canadian as well as French-Canadian officers are posted. This was the case, notably, for the Sherbrooke regiment and for the tank regiment of Three Rivers. We have even seen a Jew appointed to the command of one of these regiments, that of Sherbrooke. This same Jewish officer is to-day in command of one of the military camps in the Montreal district. Did the same thing happen in Ontario, for instance? Certainly not. Can you hear, not the noise, but the riotous uproar that would lift the roof in the Toronto hamlet if a Jew were appointed to the command of the Highlanders in that city?"

. . . . The conclusion is inescapable: It is high time to publish bilingual military manuals, to train French-Canadian officers in numbers commensurate with the proportion of French-Canadian soldiers, to open wide to them the doors of the military schools instead of merely leaving them slightly ajar, to entrust them with positions of command at the head of their compatriots even outside our own province, to preserve for French-Canadian regiments their French-Canadian character, to acknowledge the patriotism of all those French-Canadians who have enlisted in regiments other than those of Quebec province by giving them, besides officers of their own race, the legitimate hope of deserved promotion, of forming a French-Canadian brigade instead of trying to break up French-Canadian regiments, finally to allow to every French-Canadian fighter, in the army, the air force or the navy, the satisfaction of being treated as an equal by his English-speaking comrades in the three services, so that there will be no inferior race that is shouldered with all the risks and no superior race to garner all the benefits, all the gold braid and all the glory.

The reports were made and sent in by the various officers either at the end of May or at the beginning of June of last year, and the article I have just read was published on

[Mr. Pouliot.]

July 31. Two months later, or four months after the reports had been issued by officers who knew their business and who were not French-Canadians, the lamented Mr. Lapointe delivered a lecture in Quebec in the presence of His Excellency the Governor General, Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, and many other distinguished guests. He said that there would be some improvement for French-Canadians, that the manuals would be translated and that there would be more opportunity for promotion afforded to French-speaking officers. He said that there would be an opportunity for French-Canadians to get training as officers in Brockville under the direction of French-speaking Canadians from abroad and especially the officer, Colonel Blais. In that lecture the late Mr. Lapointe said that it was common knowledge that French-Canadians did not have the opportunity for promotion to which they were entitled according to their numbers in the army.

On the same occasion that Mr. Lapointe spoke, on September 25, Brigadier Vanier of Quebec said that he was happy to see these reforms in favour of French-Canadians in the army put into effect. The great mistake made by the Department of National Defence at the outset was not to mobilize the old French-Canadian regiments. The only door that was open to French-speaking Canadians who wanted to enlist was the door of the recruiting offices of the Black Watch and other English regiments. The French-Canadians did not get credit for enlisting in these regiments. I wrote to the Department of National Defence in January of this year and mentioned what Mr. Lapointe had said and what had appeared previously in the article. They told me that some regiments had been mobilized, and then in a paper dated March 30 I saw that four regiments had been mobilized.

In Montreal, on the slopes of Mount Royal, I think on Queen Mary road or somewhere around there, is a new armoury. On both sides of the entrance there were last summer posters for the Black Watch. These were bilingual, one side being in English and the other side in French, and they invited French-Canadians to join this English regiment. I saw these with my own eyes. Those who wanted to enlist passed there and they perhaps thought that it was their only opportunity to get into the army. They enlisted, but they did not get credit as French-Canadians for doing so.

In any country the minority has to suffer the slurs and attacks of those who want to