

eligibility of men for service and the standard which has to be reached in connection with the different categories are all set out in a routine order which I had here the other day and which was referred to by the hon. member for Parkdale. As I understand it, the provision is that for eligibility, at least for category A, a man has to be what they call 20/20, which is practically perfect vision, with glasses, if necessary.

There is a certain deterioration or defectiveness allowed for, provided it can be cured with glasses. That degree of defectiveness I shall have to get exactly by referring to the routine order which will be here in a few minutes. It is asked whether it is intended that they should receive dental treatment. The answer is yes. There will be comparatively minor treatment such as will be necessary to put the men in shape to be properly categorized. The question was asked whether the right to be mended was voluntary on the part of the man called for service. The answer is yes. My hon. friend asked the number of men to whom reconditioning would apply, that is to say the number of men who have been called up for service and rejected in the past and to whom reconditioning will apply. I cannot give the faintest idea of that at this stage. It will require examination of the medical boards with regard to those who have been rejected in order to see the cause of rejection.

Mr. BENCE: Can a man be called up under the National Resources Mobilization Act who has a greater degree of defective vision than one who can enlist for active service?

Mr. RALSTON: I do not think so, but I will not say without having definite knowledge from the medical officer. If the man is in category A he is in category A whether for home defence or for active service.

Mr. BENCE: Provision is made for such a man to have glasses which would correct his vision and make him subject to call, whereas the man who applied for active service might have perfect vision with glasses but might be put in category C or E with glasses off. I want to know if there is a distinction.

Mr. RALSTON: That was the first question I answered. There is no distinction. The same mending for these preliminary defects is available to men both for active service and for home defence.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The same standard prevails.

Mr. RALSTON: Yes. My hon. friend asked one other question which I do not recall.

Mr. BENCE: I asked several questions with reference to the number of men who the department estimates might be available as a result of reconditioning orders. I asked whether they had any record in respect of men discharged from the army, and the minister answered with regard to men called up.

Mr. RALSTON: I have not the record, and I do not know whether there are any records extant which would give that—that is, records which have been collated. The Minister of Pensions and National Health has the collation of the cases of discharge, but I doubt whether they are sufficiently detailed to indicate the degree of defectiveness so as to enable one to ascertain whether the men would come under the mendable clauses or not.

Mr. MacINNIS: As has been pointed out by the member for Saskatoon City, order in council P.C. 2229 makes provision for the reconditioning of persons called under the National Resources Mobilization Act of 1940 and who are found unfit. Order in council P.C. 2291 makes provision for reconditioning of persons who have volunteered for active service and have been rejected for slight physical reasons. Is it intended to extend these services to persons in civil life or to persons who may be required for work in war services? The problem of the availability of sufficient workers is one that is becoming of increasing difficulty. The Minister of Munitions in a committee the other day said that he could place at the moment 6,000 men if he had them, 1,000 at Sudbury and 5,000 at Arvida. I have seen certain official communications in reference to the employment situation in British Columbia, particularly in the logging camps, which lead me to believe that the situation is getting acute there. There are many men and women in Canada who, because of physical conditions which could be corrected by better nutrition or dental services or by medical attention, and who could play a useful part in the economic life of the country, in our war industries and in civilian industries as well, are not to-day taking their share of the burden of work, and this is a direct loss to the country. It also accentuates the fact that we put far more emphasis on the fact of having people fit for military service than on the importance of having people fit to perform ordinary civilian services. I think that some member of the government ought to be able to answer this question. As the situation is at the moment, it is retarding the actual and potential war effort of the country.