

force was composed of specially selected personnel of five officers and eleven other ranks; the Sixteenth Brigade Canadian Field Artillery consisted of eighteen officers and 478 other ranks, and in the special mobile force on the Murmansk coast there were eighteen officers and seventy-four other ranks, making a total of forty-one officers and 563 other ranks. Archangel harbour I believe is still frozen, and on the Murmansk coast, which lies to the west the men are engaged in holding the Murman peninsula and railway which reaches to the all-year open port on the Arctic ocean. We intend to get these men back to England and to Canada as soon as possible.

Our men have been the backbone of that expedition, because they were physically fit and understood their work, and I have no hesitation in saying that they were the best of the troops sent there. There were a great many thousands sent there, including British, French, and American troops. Then in the summer of 1918 volunteers were called for a bridging party to Palestine, and six officers and 250 other ranks proceeded, all of whom have been returned.

There has been an impression abroad, and I have heard some echoes of it, that officers whose duties called them to carry on work in England tried to remain there as much as possible in areas where training was going on and where other necessary work preparatory to going to the front was being done. It is alleged that these men preferred to remain in England rather than to go to the front. This impression is entirely erroneous. Out of 1,000 officers I do not think you will find one who did not prefer service at the front, rather than in England, particularly in London. Soon after I took office I instituted a policy with respect to the exchange of officers between England and France, which resulted in a continuous circulation of officers between the two countries, no matter what positions the men occupied, unless under special circumstances where one or two might be found to be of greater service in England.

During the period we have been at war it is gratifying to record that our soldiers have been awarded 17,000 medals, honours, and awards, including 53 Victoria Crosses, 1,885 Military Crosses, 19 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 1,204 Distinguished Conduct Medals, and 6,610 Military Medals.

Mr. GRIESBACH: You say that there were 17,000 decorations. Do those which you have enumerated comprise that number?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: Looking at the figures here, I do not think they make that total. However, the official record is that the forces of Canada, since the time they first went into action, were awarded upwards of 17,000 medals and honours, in the proportion I have mentioned. The figures as they are here do not lend themselves to addition, but I do not think they total 17,000. I see that the Distinguished Service Order is omitted from this, also C.B.'s and C. M. G.'s so I presume that may account for the difference. However, I can get that information for my hon. friend.

After it was decided by the Government to grant a liberal gratuity to soldiers, particularly those who had served overseas, it became apparent to us that it would be necessary to have some regulation with respect to discharges in England. The matter had always been more or less under restraint, but it was felt that there would be an anxiety on the part of soldiers—and indeed it was soon manifested after the armistice—to get home and be demobilized. So that in order that we might deal justly with all soldiers who wished to be demobilized in England, we embarked on a policy, and the conditions on which a Canadian soldier may be demobilized in England under that policy are that:

- (a) He was born in the British Isles.
- (b) He has no dependents in Canada.
- (c) He has dependents or relatives in the British Isles in such circumstances as warrant his retention there for financial or domestic reasons.
- (d) He has a bona fide offer of employment or has independent means of support irrespective of any pay or gratuity payable by the Government.

In that way, we were able to discharge those soldiers in England who justly could not be asked to come back to Canada, but it did not lead to a wholesale discharge of Canadian soldiers in England, nor could soldiers be demobilized out of their turn.

Mr. POWER: Do those soldiers lose their war service gratuity?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: No, they do not. A matter of great importance to the Canadian people at the moment is the desire of relatives and others to see the graves of men who have been buried in France and Belgium, and I have received a great many applications for passes to visit these graves. Shortly before I left England I paid a visit to France and Belgium to see for myself what was the condition of the graves of our soldiers there, and I think it might be well