

sit down with very little to do except fill out a lot of forms and try to get through the red tape, for which the medical services have been notorious. There does seem to be a great waste of the wonderful talent of these doctors, and I would suggest that the department have a very careful check made to see if that waste cannot be stopped.

Mr. RALSTON: I do not want the committee to get that idea or to be too convinced of the truth of the suggestion, which I am sure my hon. friend sincerely believes, that there is a great deal of red tape and a great waste of time in connection with the medical services. Perhaps I am too optimistic; I do not think I am, but I really think the medical services of the three armed services—of course I know more about the army than I do about the others—are in excellent hands; that the organization is such as will produce results; that they are alive to the fact that the supply of doctors, nurses and hospital personnel is not unlimited, and that they must improvise as far as possible. I know there becomes a routine in the army medical services, the same as in any other service; but I am sure if my hon. friend would visit the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps training centre at Camp Borden and see the intensive month which these doctors, old and young, spend there learning something about the army, learning something about their duties, trying to eliminate red tape as much as possible and at the same time to become useful both as regimental officers and as medical officers, he would feel that the army is making genuine progress along the lines he has suggested.

Mr. GREEN: The situation now may be better than it was, but a year or so ago I knew of one doctor who had to write the words "light duty" and sign his name after the names of eighty patients every day. That is just tommyrot, and things like that should be cut out.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Would the minister explain the new system of categorization which has been built up, and which he referred to this afternoon as the "Pulhems" system? Everyone realizes that the old category system had become rather archaic and out of date with the passage of years. I should like an explanation from the minister, if he is able to give it, as to how this system now in effect overseas is designed to improve the man-power situation. The questions I wish to ask the minister are these. Under the new system, when put into effect in Canada, is it the intention to take men into the army who would be unable to serve, except in certain categories.

as office men, and to take in another category in another capacity, and the highest category to serve overseas? This is a tremendous change. I should like to know how it is to be brought into effect, and whether it is to be utilized in so far as the examination of men called up for service or joining voluntarily is concerned.

Mr. RALSTON: Well, I certainly stepped into something when I mentioned this matter, because I must confess to the hon. member that I do not know the details of the working out of the system. I had the director-general of medical services appear before defence council about three months ago, at which time he explained the situation quickly, and outlined the general principles. As I remember it, the categorization was for army service, and not just for physical categorization. And categorization for army service was indicated by the reference to the particular function which might be impaired in respect of a man who is not physically perfect, instead of referring to A, B, C or D, regardless of the function impaired. In other words, it might be the head, the respiratory organs, the limbs or the heart. The categorization refers to the particular function affected. As a result of having such classification, it will be possible to utilize men for the army who formerly were just shut out because they were in the blanket category A, B, or C. The plan is being used, and will be used for those who are called up for service, and the others who have volunteered.

I should like to give the committee more detailed and scientific information; but I simply cannot do so, and I believe I must confess my inability to do so. I should not like to indicate to the committee that I have the scientific ability to describe the system.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Does it mean that many men who, heretofore, would have been discharged for physical unfitness, and who are now in the service, will be kept on, and placed in work commensurate with their peculiar abilities?

Mr. RALSTON: I should think it would mean that. Certainly that is one of the ideas of adopting it. It is a more scientific and precise method of cataloguing men according to their physical abilities, having regard to the needs of the army.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Is it used in any other army?

Mr. POULIOT: What would be most scientific would be to put at headquarters those who are unfit, so as to relieve those who are fit. That would be scientific.