

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): The complaints made from the central provinces and western Canada are small compared with the complaints that might be registered from the eastern provinces. In central Canada and in the west coupons are recognized as entitling the holders to five gallons per coupon. The maritime provinces are reduced to two gallons per coupon and have to contend with all the other restrictions about which they complain. The people in the maritime provinces are prepared to submit to this control if necessary in carrying on the war, but the premier of Nova Scotia, the premier of New Brunswick, and hundreds of thousands of people in the maritimes have not yet been convinced that the restrictions in those provinces are either necessary or fair. Some hope has been held out by the Minister of Munitions and Supply that the regulations as they apply to the maritimes will shortly be relaxed, and I should like to impress upon the Minister of Finance, who comes from Nova Scotia, as I do, the importance of the complaints I am making. He himself must have received many complaints; he has certainly had complaints from the premier of Nova Scotia. I urge upon him, therefore, the importance of seeing that early action is taken with regard to restoring the value of the coupon unit, in whole or at least in part, to users of gasoline in the maritime provinces. There are grievances in the other provinces, but the complaints from the maritimes are far more substantial than those registered in other parts of the country.

Mr. GILLIS: I agree with the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Black). If there is a section of the country that has a grievance in connection with the rationing of gasoline it is the maritimes. The reduction in the unit can be understood. There is not sufficient transportation to get gas into that section. We accept that statement at its face value, but there are rumours, and there is considerable evidence, since the unit was reduced, to the effect that gas has been shipped out of the maritime provinces, out of Nova Scotia particularly, into other sections of Canada. I am trying to get information in that regard from the Minister of Munitions and Supply. However, accepting at its face value the statement that it is necessary at the present time to reduce the unit in Nova Scotia, we feel that if there is not sufficient gas for essential purposes the people of those provinces are prepared to make whatever sacrifices are necessary. But when it is shown to them week after week and day after day that on the part of the military authorities particularly there is little attempt to conserve gas, the situation appears in a different light.

I had a long list of complaints which I brought to the minister's attention. If there is a shortage of gasoline and if it is necessary to ration it on the basis that exists in Nova Scotia, then it should be done. But as I pointed out some time ago, in that event pleasure driving should be discontinued completely, so that what gas is available should be made available for essential purposes. In sections where there are large military concentrations station wagons and military cars are on the road practically all hours of the night, certainly not for military purposes. Moreover, military cars are in the habit of driving officers from headquarters to the barber shop and waiting for them, three or four cars at a time. They wait for these officers until they are through shaving and take them back to headquarters. They also take officers from headquarters to clubs and back to headquarters again. That is not necessary, while in small communities where there is a concentration of troops the people who have legitimate business to carry on are obliged to walk to and from their places of business. Their business is crippled or curtailed because of lack of gas, and to see these military cars used for the purpose I have indicated is not a sight to inspire further belt-tightening on the part of people who require gas for legitimate purposes.

Those who use oil will have to tighten their belts too. I had one complaint of an ex-service man who was crippled during the last war and who for the last twenty years has been earning his living as a commercial traveller. He is unable to walk and must use his car to get around, but he is in a category that gives him two gallons a week. The result is that his business is at a standstill. He made special application to the board in Halifax, but obtained no redress. I appealed to the oil controller, setting out the facts of the case. I received the reply that he was very sorry but no distinction could be made. That car is essential because it is this man's means of earning his living. He is crippled, but he demonstrated that he was prepared to lay down his life for democracy; yet he cannot get gas to earn his living, and there is no one who will feed him. Where there are extenuating circumstances, some redress should be given.

I had the privilege of going to Camp Borden some time ago and there I found a fleet of buses running out of the camp. I am not complaining about that. They leave the camp loaded, travel seventeen or twenty miles and return to the camp empty. There is not much service there. There is waste of gas and rubber. I believe that 50 per cent of the buses on the road travelling on that basis and