

like our English-speaking ones, have had very heavy fighting for prolonged periods and our reserves are low. Special measures have been and are being taken to correct this situation and already there are some promising results for which we are indebted to our colleagues from the province of Quebec and others. We need all the help we can be given in this matter and I look forward to placing the full details before you for consideration.

To summarize the situation in respect to reinforcements: I would say that the actual dispatches during this calendar year in total will be very much greater than originally planned. Shipping is completely arranged till the end of December and while there may be some delays in sailings, I do not believe that the effect would be serious. Some additional shipping can be obtained in December if we should be in a position to make use of it.

I want to say, quite definitely, that all anxiety would be removed if we were able to find in December a total, above the numbers now arranged, of 5,000 infantry fully trained or in an advanced state of training, a similar number in January and a further 6,000 in the succeeding months.

Every possible economy in the employment of fit general service personnel in home establishments has now been made or is in process, and the men so made available are included in the figures of planned dispatches.

In addition the only source from which this additional 16,000 can be secured is from the N.R.M.A.

If we are to dispatch any considerable body of these men in time to ease the anxieties in the situation, arrangements for shipping must be initiated forthwith.

To be realistic, our plans for the future must be strictly related to the nature of the task which remains to be completed and so I shall, if I may, give the house an appreciation of the nature of the battles which lie before the allied armies of which our Canadian troops now form an important part.

We now, both in Italy and in northwest Europe, are up against fortified zones of great depth and strength with every obstacle and device to hamper our advance which the German mind has been able to conceive. In northwest Europe hundreds of thousands of slave labour have been employed for years to create the fixed defences of the west wall. They have been carefully sited by the skilled engineers of the German army to give them every advantage of terrain. They are provided with all the accessories to make life easy for those in garrison: heavy concrete

emplacements for machine and anti-tank guns, bomb-proof shelters for resting personnel, elaborate roads and railways for rapid transfer of reserves from place to place, deeply buried cables to maintain certain intercommunication, huge dumps of food and ammunition and spares and replacements for guns and tanks and other gear. We can take it that these defences are provided with everything which could be thought of which would be of use and every day they are being strengthened by the forced labour of the German people.

To break through these lines we must turn to siege warfare of the most intense character and above all else we must have guns and shells in lavish quantities.

We learned in the last war and again in this that in siege warfare there is little opportunity for manoeuvre. When we attack we must use vast quantities of shells to crush out of existence wide sections of the enemy's defence and to paralyse his garrisons and so free the way for the advances of our infantry closely supported by the fire of mobile guns. By reason of the immensity of the volume of fire required and the time taken to get the ammunition forward, these battles go in phases marked by short periods of intense activity and longer periods of quiet in between.

The conditions in northwest Europe will, I think, approximate very closely to those we experienced in France and Flanders in the later phases of the first world war. We will have to turn back to this period for guidance on the wastage rates to be expected in the various arms and services. It is probable that these rates will be more uniform throughout all troops in the forward areas. We must be very careful that the remustering from other arms which we have been carrying out to make up for the higher rates in the infantry in the mobile war since D-day is not carried too far. Fortunately, as I have said, we have no present anxiety as to the adequacy of the reserves in arms other than infantry, but the situation must be closely watched.

So with the business of siege warfare in front of us, it becomes most important to remember that the supply of shells and munitions is a vital necessity which must be met. The call has gone out to multiply the rate of production several fold and this must be done as a first priority on our industrial effort. I believe that the effort which is required can be made without diversion of men needed for reinforcements. We can divert men from less essential industries. We can use many more women. We can use some of the personnel in the armed forces who are not in the categories fit for service overseas. I have proposals in this connection which I hope to raise