

some uniform standard. We did not have the same length of time that we have for training the officers in the male branch of the army, and we were fortunate enough to make arrangements with McGill university under which we took over a large portion of Macdonald college, and there at this minute there is a class, and has been since April 27, of over 300 of the corps. We are having them all take a course there. I had a talk the other day with the district officer commanding military district No. 4. He had visited the school and is tremendously impressed by it, and particularly by the quality of the young ladies who are giving instruction. He even suggested that they might be used for instructional purposes in connection with other branches of the army as well, in view of the great aptitude they showed for that kind of work.

As I mentioned to the committee the other night, the difficulty has been accommodation. I think I can safely say that in five different districts in the dominion the quarters are now practically completed, and now that we are ready to house the members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps they will be taking on their duties in some of the lines I have mentioned. District No. 1, I recall—that is the district of which London is headquarters—has been particularly enthusiastic with regard to the work which these women have done. They are working in quite a number of the basic training centres. At Camp Borden there are practically none of the Canadian Women's Army Corps as yet, but there again it is a matter of accommodation. We are having temporary accommodation arranged for, and we expect to have a substantial number of the women's corps there. In Ottawa we have just acquired a place where we can house a hundred members of the corps. They have, of course, been working here for some time. They have been on subsistence, but we feel that it is highly desirable, from the point of view of esprit de corps and the general spirit which association together produces, to have them all together, and that is being done. I have great hopes of the corps and great satisfaction in the work that has already been done. The enlistments as of April 11 were 72 officers and 2,188 other ranks.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Can the minister give an estimate of the probable strength over a given period of time?

Mr. RALSTON: The adjutant-general tells me that his requisition is for roughly 5,000. I hate to mention big figures but I do think the figure can be increased away beyond that. I know they can be trained, and I am sure

they can be utilized. Without making any forecast, what is in my mind is a strength of possibly 15,000 at least.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): That information is very useful. What about the training of these young women for anti-aircraft work?

Mr. RALSTON: As to training in handling weapons or munitions, here again I am mentioning something that was given to me quite unofficially, and I am not sure that it is proper for me to mention it here. When I was on the Pacific coast an officer in charge of the searchlight battery mentioned to me that he believed that the members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps would be able to do that sort of work admirably. They are certainly equipped to do it. They have the standard of education, and their aptitude indicates that they would be able to do it. There again it is a matter of accommodation, and it is somewhat more difficult for the corps than for the army.

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): Are they not being used in England in prediction work?

Mr. RALSTON: Yes, in connection with coastal defence.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): What is the term of enlistment?

Mr. RALSTON: For the duration.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): Last year during a recruiting parade in Toronto an accident occurred. The parade was coming along Queen street, and near the city hall a man ran out between two army vehicles and was knocked down by a trooper on a motorcycle. The man had no business to be running between the vehicles, of course, but as a result the trooper's motorcycle got out of control, ran into the crowd and pinned several people against a hydrant. One woman in particular was very badly hurt. Although she has had a great deal of medical care, she is still in the hospital. This is just one of a number of incidents. I took the matter up with Ottawa, and there was no difficulty as regards the Department of National Defence, but they consulted the Department of Justice and got an opinion to the effect that there was no liability. Probably there is not, but I imagine that if it had been a civil case and a question of insurance had been involved, there would have been legal action of some kind, a settlement would have been made, and the woman would have got something. In this case she has nothing at all. She was an innocent bystander, as were other people who were injured. If the parade had not taken place