

hour and-a-half to pass His Majesty the King; you can imagine what an army of 268,000 is. Well, we tried to do the best we could. Demobilization came upon us in the fall of the year, just before winter. I have heard that you had the mildest winter that Canada ever had, but the people of England, France and Belgium say that last winter was the most disagreeable they have ever known—much cold and wet, and a lack of sunshine. There would be periods of a month when you would not see the sun at all in England. We had these men to house and to take care of under these conditions. Moreover, a fuel famine came upon the country after the winter had set in, and we had to supply the men with extra blankets. However, I am glad to say that the repatriation of our men has proceeded very well.

Some months before the armistice was signed I organized a demobilization committee to consider how to work out this problem when peace came, and the work of that committee was of great service when the armistice actually did come. The Prime Minister said this afternoon that some people thought it would take two years to get the soldiers back, having regard to the number of ships that were sunk by submarines and to the great demand for tonnage. I have heard people say that it would take three years to get our soldiers back, in view of all the circumstances. I am happy to be able to say that if peace is not signed pretty soon, all our soldiers will be back in Canada before peace is signed. There will be in England after the end of this month about 80,000 Canadians. Nearly all our troops are out of France. The troops that went to the Rhine returned to Belgium some time before they went back to England. My latest report, which is dated May 19, says that at that time there were 4,516 Canadian troops in France.

Mr. PEDLOW: Does that include Canadians in the Imperial Service in France?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: Only those in our own forces. The 4,516 were made up as follows: Three hospitals, 1,000; details at Etaples and Rouen, 600; Infantry Works Companies, 1,300; burial party, 1,000; patients in hospital, 616. I should think that by this time most of them are in England.

We have moved from France to England since the armistice 140,000 troops. By the end of May we shall have embarked for Canada 185,216 troops. We expect that the 80,000 Canadians who will be in England at

the end of May will almost all be returned to Canada by the end of July, though there will be a small remnant still to return after that date.

The matter of steamship accommodation has presented a very difficult problem. I speak with feeling on the subject, because I have had some very warm interviews with the Imperial authorities regarding it. The principle that had to be settled in respect to the transportation from England of Canadian troops was whether the Canadians should have priority over American troops, and if so, to what extent. The relations between Great Britain and the United States are very intimate, and it is desirable that they should be; but I found it necessary to establish the principle that Canadian troops should have priority over American troops, and I succeeded in having it established. We have in the service of Canada all the great Canadian liners as well as those plying on the North Atlantic whose home port on this side of the water is in the United States. Unless something goes wrong, we shall have brought back to Canada during the month of May 52,000 Canadian troops.

The Americans will, no doubt, bring back a good many during this month, but they will not be able to bring back, I am informed, more than 5,000 on British ships. I thought, perhaps, I could finish my remarks before six o'clock, but as I have still a few things to say which I think may interest the House, if the members will bear with me for a few minutes after eight o'clock, I will then conclude my observations.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

After Recess.

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

Sir EDWARD KEMP (Minister of Overseas Military Forces) (Resuming): When the House rose at six o'clock I was dealing with the question of demobilization so far as it affects the Canadian troops in England. I pointed out that although the weather conditions were unpleasant, the monotony of the troops was broken by diversions in the way of sports and education, and in other ways everything was done to help them pass the time as pleasantly and profitably as possible. The conduct of the Canadian soldiers during this very, very trying period has been excellent—better, I venture to say, than the conduct of any other of