

Supply—National Defence

We hoped, and our hope has been met, that a good proportion of the people who took these courses would become interested in these matters and would join the regular militia, whose primary duty at the present time is rescue and survival operations. This type of activity for which they have been trained they can carry on better in a militia unit than the regular army, and the more of them we can get the better our survival operation is going to be.

In fact I have been delighted with the very large proportion of men who have joined the regular militia units. From the first two courses there were about 14,000 men, quite a high proportion, and I hope there will be just as high a proportion from the course going on at the present time and from the final and fourth course. I trust that has possibly answered some of the questions which the hon. member has in mind.

As I indicated I regret very much that a mistake was made in this pamphlet, but the number of people misled by it was very small. The amount of money involved was around \$10. To people who had to live entirely on this amount it might have loomed up as quite a large sum. I am not saying it would not be to them, but it is not a large sum which was involved and the number of people misled by this was very small indeed. Of course when the mistake was discovered the pamphlet was withdrawn and the remaining copies were destroyed. The total cost, rather than being the \$5,000 suggested, was around \$3,000.

Mr. Hellyer: I think the minister could help very much to clear up this matter if he would read to the committee the contractual arrangement which applies between the graduates of these classes and the Canadian army, once they have graduated.

Mr. Harkness: There is no contractual arrangement unless a man joins a regular militia unit and, as I have just indicated, a very fair proportion have done that.

Mr. Hellyer: What proportion?

Mr. Harkness: I think the number was 4,000 all told, who volunteered for the regular forces. Some 2,600 odd applied to join the regular forces and of these we have accepted 1,410. So we have had really a very good response from both those points of view to the six weeks' training that these men, who for the most part were young, undertook.

Mr. Hellyer: Is the minister advising the committee that there is no relationship presently existing between the army and the graduates, that there is no chain of command which provides the terms under which they will serve in their civil survival role once

[Mr. Harkness.]

they have graduated? If not, what is the purpose? Is it just a school for unoccupied people, or what is the purpose for the expenditure of the money?

Mr. Harkness: I think I have explained what the purpose was but for some people it is very hard to come to grips with any explanation, particularly if they do not want to grasp it. It is quite evident that they cannot have any contractual arrangement. There was no idea that when a man joined for this special militia training he was going to be obligated to serve for any longer period than six weeks. That was part of his term of engagement.

Mr. Pitman: I thank the minister for the long explanation he has given. I must admit that \$2 and \$10 do not mean very much, but they did the week before Christmas. I want to come back to the problem of what happens to these people who do not join the militia. Is there any way they can be co-ordinated into civilian E.M.O. programs? Is there any way in which they can be directed into some area of activity being carried on in every community under these various E.M.O. co-ordinators throughout the country?

Mr. Harkness: This varies a great deal from one part of the country to another. A record is kept of the names of these people and it is made available to many of the civilian organizations dealing with the emergency measures organization. Of course the thing you have to keep in mind is that in the event of an attack on this country the military forces that exist would not be sufficient to form more than cadres or organizational centres, and they would have to pick up a large number of the civilian population if they were going to be able to carry on survival and rescue operations at the speed and to the extent that would be necessary. Therefore the larger the number of people in the general population you have trained in these survival methods the better will be your position. If we could have every civilian trained that would be ideal.

Miss LaMarsh: There is one thing I would like to inquire of the minister in regard to what he said very decisively about the unemployed taking these courses. I would like to inquire exactly how far in advance of the announcement of the first course was the plan conceived? I have reference to my own riding in Niagara where a very large armoury, admirably suited for such training, was sold off within a matter of three or four months before there was notice about training these troops. It was then necessary to take over an empty church from the Department of Public Works in order to have this training go on,