

*War Appropriation*

recess that he would make a statement as to what progress had been made on recommendations which had come to his attention during the last ten months, and particularly in the November session, having to do with the setting up of the interdepartmental committee and several other economies. I understand the minister will make one comprehensive statement covering some forty recommendations.

Mr. BROOKS: If I might revert to the matter which we were just discussing, I have had some practical experience with it, and I might say that if individual members of this house are having plenty of correspondence, the commanding officers are also having their share of trouble in this connection. Possibly the newspapers are as much to blame as anyone. What we call part 3 orders are not always interpreted as they should be. There is a general impression that there should have been an exodus from the training centres and the army to the farms. As the minister has explained, there is an application for leave from the soldier himself. This application has to be accompanied by letters from two disinterested persons. They make a statutory declaration as to the facts, which is sent to the district officer commanding by the commanding officer of the unit with his recommendation. But I think the difficulty arises in connection with the A recruits and the R recruits. With the R recruits this provision applies, but with the active it does not, and I would imagine that the trouble to which the hon. member for Weyburn refers is probably due to men in the depots who are active service men coming to the training centres and not coming under the same regulations as the R recruits. They came in just about the time, March 23 to April 9. I know we had considerable difficulty; the men from the depots could not understand why they were not given the same consideration as the men who had been called up under the National War Services Act. A good deal of confusion has occurred on that account.

There are a good many applications in my training centre, and I judge the same is true all over the dominion. The men seem to think that all they need do is make application and their application should be granted. But it is supposed to be granted only on compassionate grounds and not as a matter of right.

Mr. POULIOT: I hope the minister will be able to give me some information about the young man I mentioned the other day who had six months leave given to him by the

[Mr. J. H. Harris.]

national war services board and who could not go back to his father's farm but instead was sent to Nanaimo.

I find this heading in the *Montreal Gazette* of March 27, "Compulsory trainees are nucleus of new coast defence divisions". In the *Montreal Standard* of March 28 there is a picture of the Minister of National Defence in an article entitled "Home Army". On May 2, I read in the *Ottawa Journal* a dispatch sent from somewhere in British Columbia by mail entitled "Popular French-Canadian unit now in Pacific defence zone. Regiment entrusted with important operational role on coast". What those young French-Canadians are doing on the coast is entirely different from what the Mennonites are doing there. The young French-Canadians are fighting for their country while the Mennonites are earning a dollar an hour working in the shipyards.

One thing of which I have to complain to the minister is that letters which are sent to soldiers or trainees in the army addressed to what was the right address a few days or a few weeks ago are not forwarded as they should be to the men where they are; they are sent back to the sender. I have many cases like that. In one instance it was sent to the first camp where the man went and afterwards it was sent back to me. I have here another envelope addressed to a soldier who was at Farnham. It is marked, "No Record; return to sender." He was forwarded somewhere else, either in British Columbia or even in Nova Scotia. The county of Témiscouata does its share in defending both coasts now. I have here another envelope that was addressed to a soldier at Coteau barracks at Three Rivers. I know the man is at Debart camp, in Nova Scotia; I heard that from his father, but the envelope has been returned to me from Coteau barracks instead of being forwarded to the man in Nova Scotia. There is no excuse for that. Soldiers are always glad to receive letters, and they should get their mail properly. It is done for civilians; I do not know why it is not done for soldiers and trainees in the army. There is no justification for it. I have here a letter I wrote to a soldier at Valcartier, in which I enclosed a copy of a letter I had received from the Department of National Defence. That letter also was returned. I have here the envelope; it was addressed to the soldier, giving his name and number, at Valcartier camp.

The situation is most unsatisfactory; it seems as though soldiers are not any better off than those in concentration camps. Of course there must be a reason for it. The