

REPORTED IN PARLIAMENT BRIEFLY

PROGRESS IN DEFENCE: The Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, made the following statement in the House of Commons on April 7 during consideration of his estimates:

"....In the first place, with regard to the organization of the armed forces, I believe that we have made, in the field of co-ordination and unification, as great progress as has been made in any other country.

"In the second place, in regard to the primary objective of the training of officers, I believe that in our various plans--in the cadet service colleges, in the university training plan, as well as in the command contingent plans we have in the 4,000 officer candidates in training to the equivalent of a university degree, plus a year's practical experience with their service, a greater number, in proportion to our population, training for a high standard, than any country in the world.

"In the third place, with regard to recruiting for the active force, we have just had the best two months of recruiting since the war. The results for the last six months show an 81 per cent improvement over the corresponding period of the year before. If those numbers are maintained we will continue to obtain the number of men required to build up our armed forces to the strength we believe to be necessary. What is more, the quality is of the kind we need.

RESERVE FORCES

"Fourth, with regard to the reserve forces, in addition to the 40,000 and more men in the active force, we have 40,000 men in the reserve forces; and when you compare that with the corresponding figure of something like 75,000 in the territorial forces of England, organized on the same basis and for the same purpose, then I suggest we are making good progress. I would like to see many more men in the reserve force. That force as regards equipment and spirit is in much better shape than ever before in peacetime. Then, we have 20,000 civilians doing work which used to be done by service personnel, because it is more economical to do it this way.

"Altogether we have had in the department and in the services 100,000 men and women, of whom 60,000 are full time, who I believe are well qualified to do the jobs they are called upon to do.

"Fifth, with regard to equipment, we are I believe the first country to undertake the design and construction of a new type of high-speed anti-submarine vessel; three of them will be laid down this year. We are continuing the development of the Orenda engine and the XC-100 night fighter all-weather aircraft by A.V. Roe. Tests already made of the engine indicate that in all probability it may be not

only a success, but an exceedingly good engine. Our hope is that the plane will be flight tested this summer; and as soon as it is, plans are made for us to go into production on the first jet-engined plane to be designed and entirely built in Canada.

"Finally, with regard to relations with the civilian community, the relations between the acting and the reserve forces and the relations among the three services, the effort has been made steadily throughout the period since the war to create the idea that this is one partnership essential to the welfare of all of our country. I believe that, commensurate with our resources and commensurate with the program which has been set, they are doing a good job for the defence of Canada."

ARMED FORCES 40,811: In reply to a question, the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, in the House of Commons on April 6, said that the strength of Canada's armed forces had increased by 6,049 from March 31, 1948, to February 28, 1949. He gave the following table of details:

Strength at February 28, 1949:

	Officers	Other ranks	Total
Navy.....	1,138	6,843	7,981
Army.....	2,521	16,002	18,523
Air Force.....	2,698	11,609	14,307
Total for the three services...	6,357	34,454
Grand total.....			40,811

Increase from March 31, 1948, to February 28, 1949:

	Officers	Other ranks	Total
Navy.....	74	1,047	1,121
Army.....	222	2,416	2,638
Air Force.....	622	1,668	2,290
Total increase for the three services.....	918	5,131
Grand total.....			6,049

EXPORT CREDITS INSURANCE: Protection afforded to Canadian exporters by the Crown-operated Export Credits Insurance Corporation totalled \$41,037,799 in policies at the close of last year, it was revealed in the annual report of the corporation tabled in the House of Commons by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. Howe.

Claims paid to exporters covering losses sustained by them during 1948 amounted to \$110,725. The great majority of these claims resulted from exchange transfer difficulties.