

readily to the army, but they prefer to go into the navy. When they had to vote on the question whether they should go into the army, naturally there was an inclination on their part to vote no. Some consideration should be given to men who have been trained practically a lifetime as sailors and fishermen, so that they may be allowed to select the navy in which to serve rather than the army. There is all the more reason for that in the fact that they are admirably equipped for service at sea. They are sailors ready-made and are considered perhaps as good as any in the world.

I wish to say a few words also on nationals in exile, because I have had some personal experience with this question. When Germany overran the small countries of Europe, some of which had a splendid mercantile marine and many of whose people had spent their lives on the sea, many of them going fishing in the south seas, I am informed that many of the ships of these countries were directed by the British government to Nova Scotia. They obviously could not return to their own country in Europe, and they came to Nova Scotia ports—a very natural thing for them to do. But when they came here the crews became wards of Canada—not in the financial sense, because fortunately their governments were well supplied with revenue from their maritime activities and could look after these people. We all know that governments in exile have been doing splendid work in training their men for the armed services. I have had personal experience with that, and I know they are doing a splendid job. Their officers and men have received superior training. These governments in exile asked for volunteers from their nationals who are now wards of Canada. Many of these men who came here were good machinists or good engineers. When they were brought to Nova Scotia there was no work for them at the time, but those amongst them who were technically trained men were soon working in the war industries of Nova Scotia, at Lunenburg, Liverpool, Halifax and Pictou, and they are doing a good job. They are good men, well trained in mechanics. For some time the voluntary system prevailed, but recently a call was sent out to these men who were working in the war industries of Nova Scotia to come and register and be medically examined.

I have personal knowledge that one of the governments in exile called up men up to thirty-seven years of age. Some of them were married in their own countries; others married after they came to Canada. As I understand the Canadian law, we call up single men or widowers without children up to thirty

years of age, and I think I am correct in assuming, from the statements that have been made in the house and from letters I have received in communication with the authorities, that these wards of Canada are subject to Canadian law and must be treated the same as Canadian citizens, and that therefore thirty years should be the age limit in calling up these men, so long as the Canadian law provides that age limit. Some hon. gentlemen may say: Why don't these men tell their authorities that they prefer to remain in industry, being over the Canadian age call and working on naval repairs.

One can well understand that a man who is a national of one of our allies and has a wife and, perhaps, children in a foreign country might get a black mark from his own nationals if he assumed the privilege of invoking Canadian law in his behalf. The minister said the other day that the matter was still under advisement and an agreement would be made with these nationals. I am aware of that; I have considerable correspondence upon the subject which I will make available to the minister. I believe the agreement should be so drawn that the man who is a foreign national will not have to assert himself, that the Canadian authorities will state what the law is and that we expect these men to be bound by it as so stated, so that the man who is a national of that foreign country need not fear that when the war is over he will be prejudiced because he invoked the law of this country in respect to privileges which are available to our own citizens.

I have only praise for the nationals of our allies in eastern Canada. I want to compliment them; they are doing a splendid job and doing it actively. But I repeat that this is a situation which should be cleared up, that these men who are working in wartime industry throughout Nova Scotia as engineers and machinists and who are over thirty years of age should be definitely told what their obligations and duties are. In this way everything would be aboveboard, and they would feel that they were doing their duty as expected of them.

There is one other matter about which I wish to speak. I was absent in Nova Scotia when the observation was made by the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green), although I think he later withdrew it, that Nova Scotia members did not have the gumption to speak up for the defence of that province. I want to say here, and I say it advisedly, as a member of this house, that I regard the rights and the benefits of the people I represent as my first duty here, and I would not hesitate to assert them if I believed that they were impaired. The hon.