

Mr. BERGERON. And at the expense of the government ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. No ; always at the expense of the municipality.

Mr. BERGERON. The same as it was formerly ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Just the same. There is this difference, though, that in the case of the permanent force there is less expense involved.

Mr. BERGERON. It would only be the transportation ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Probably. Now, to return to the organization of the militia. The militia of Canada is composed of the staff, the permanent force, the active militia and the reserve militia. The reserve militia exists only in name to-day. It is only the population between 18 and 60 behind the enrolled active militia which may be called upon to some extent, perhaps to a very considerable extent, in the event of severe stress. The staff may be considered to be a part of the permanent force. The staff, I suppose, might be called the thinking part of the organization. The permanent force is the teaching part of the organization. The prime object of the establishment and maintenance of the permanent force is the education of the active militia of the country, while at the same time it performs certain garrison duties. These duties it has been doing for some time now, especially in Halifax and Esquimalt, and a considerable part of the time and attention of the permanent force will be devoted to those purposes. I may add here that a depot of the permanent force would have had to be created in the province of Nova Scotia even if we had not decided to take this step of taking over the garrison at Halifax and relieving the British government from all expense in connection with it.

Mr. TISDALE. Could you not have utilized the regulars for instruction there ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. No ; that attempt has been made on several occasions, and has never worked well.

Mr. TISDALE. You have given up the idea of utilizing them altogether ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Yes, it has never succeeded. In the same way in British Columbia it would have been necessary to establish a depot so that you may place against the expenditure involved in establishing two, it is true, very much smaller depots in Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

Beginning at the top, on the 1st of February, when we had the first discussion this session on militia items, I discussed very fully the reorganization of the Militia Department at Ottawa and I do not propose to enter into that now at any

Sir F. W. BORDEN.

length. A militia council was organized under the new law which was passed at the last session. That council was organized in November last on the lines very largely of the army council of England. We have always felt it to be desirable that the two forces should act in concert in peace as they would in the event of war, at any rate on this continent. We have thought it advisable to follow the lead of the British army in this respect. I believe, and those who co-operate with me agree, that the establishment of this council has been a very great advantage to the militia. It has promoted co-operation and co-ordination of the different departments, and continuity of service. The difficulty in old times was that different generals came with different views, that nothing was recorded, and that each new general seemed to think that it was incumbent upon him to start out with some new policy ; and expense and sometimes serious loss was involved in these changes. At any rate, the advantage of a consistent development along a certain fixed line of policy was not secured. Now the heads of the four principal departments—the chief of the general staff, the adjutant-general, the quartermaster general and the master-general of ordnance—the four military members, meet with the minister and the deputy minister and the financial member of the council, at least once every two weeks. It has been our custom to meet once a week and sometimes oftener, with, I believe, the very greatest advantage to the country and to the different members of the council. They are in touch with each other, they are able to talk matters over and to exchange ideas, and everything of importance which takes place at that council is made a matter of record ; so that at any future time my successor, whoever he may be, will have the advantage, so far as it is an advantage, of reading what was done, and of learning the reasons which induced us to come to any particular conclusion or to change any particular line of policy.

I have said that the permanent force is the source to which the active militia must look for its training and education. The distribution of the permanent force is a matter of some importance. I said something not long ago about a chain of military depots from Halifax to the Pacific coast, and I was promptly quoted in some of the newspapers as having said that we were going to create a chain of forts. Nothing so serious as that was in our minds. The idea was to have these depots distributed in such a way as to accomplish two purposes—first, in the most convenient way, the education and training of the active militia, the officers and non-commissioned officers, and secondly, to give the greatest amount of service in assisting to maintain order within the country. I referred to the