

amount of work involved, and you cannot get those things from outside places in a very short time.

Mr. MACDONALD: There should be an official in the department who would keep track of the persons employed in each military district. I do not think it is a very difficult question to answer.

Sir EDWARD KEMP: The decentralization has affected it. I will bring it down as soon as possible.

Permanent force, \$2,300,000.

Mr. MACDONALD: Will the minister be good enough to tell us how many persons are connected with the permanent force of Canada to-day and where they are located?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: There are 29 lieutenant-colonels, 30 majors, 73 captains, 152 lieutenants, 3 nursing sisters, 69 warrant officers, 292 staff sergeants, 296 sergeants, 167 corporals, and 1,745 privates, a total of 2,856.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Where are those men located? What does "Permanent Force" mean now?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: It is the same permanent force. They have been recruited up to strength to take the place of those who have gone overseas.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Where are they?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: They are doing garrison duty and instructional work at Halifax, Montreal, Esquimalt, Toronto, London and Kingston.

Mr. MACDONALD: With regard to the question of the friends of boys who are at the front desiring to get them home and desiring to get word of them, I do not think there is much good in going to the department. Would the minister be good enough to tell us if there is any way in which we can make application so that the matter can be dealt with speedily and effectively? Members of Parliament write to the department and we are told that the matter is not under the control of the department but that somebody overseas must be communicated with. Whom can we speedily apply to in a proper case?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: I have no objection if the hon. gentleman will write to the minister. I get hundreds of letters every day regarding these matters. Letters from members of the House receive my personal attention as far as possible. There are rules by which we are guided in respect to the matter. It is very difficult to get any

one back from the front. I have a staff who attend to all the requests that are made in a very courteous and efficient way. No matter who makes the request no matter from whom it comes, a reply is sent.

Mr. MACDONALD: I have no complaint to make but I am pointing out that we write to the minister and the minister writes to us that what we ask will be a difficult thing to accomplish. Is there any reason why a member of Parliament should not write to somebody on the other side in regard to a matter of this kind?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: If a letter is sent to the responsible minister, Sir George Perley, London, he will see that it gets every attention and that it reaches the proper official. Or, if a letter is sent through the department there it will receive attention. I fancy that most of these inquiries come to the department.

Mr. MACDONALD: In case of injury or death the friends apply to a member of Parliament and it would be an advantage if the member could communicate direct with somebody overseas without going through the roundabout process of first applying to the department here. Is there anybody that we could cable? A friend of mine had a boy killed, he wrote to me and I wrote to the department. I have no complaint to make of the department beyond the fact that the red tape of communicating with the department and through the department with the other side means a loss of time. Naturally, the friends who have been bereaved, or whose boys have been wounded, would like to have things done more expeditiously. Why should not we as members of Parliament know somebody over there to whom we could cable if necessary, or to whom the friends of the dead or wounded could cable, for some definite information. Because, when a boy is wounded, his friends do not know what his condition is and moments seem like hours, days and years. Could not the minister arrange that we could communicate with somebody over there?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: When matters are sufficiently urgent, and when it is not thought desirable to communicate by ordinary letter, cables are sent making inquiries either through the 11 p.m. cords branch or the adjutant's branch or direct from my own office through my own private secretary.