

Supply—National Defence

survival? I cannot help but feel there has been no over-all picture conceived as to what these men are going to do, how they are going to fit into the whole pattern of our emergency measures organizations, the whole effort we have been directing towards some kind of planned approach towards survival. I feel there should be a clear idea of what these men are going to do. Here we have over one third of them who are actually in the militia and have gone there from this course. I am sure this course was not set up as a means of bringing men into the militia, and yet this is what has happened. I am sure this course was not set up as a means of getting people off the unemployment rolls—at least, that certainly was not the impression with which we were left. However, 75 per cent of the men who took the course were unemployed and the government failed to take this into account by providing a living wage for those who were married and on relief at the time they took the course. At least, they should have been able to survive themselves for the six weeks they took the course.

I have seen people who were on relief and married, who had nine children and had to try to keep those nine children on \$40 a week. I do not believe any member in this house would believe that could take place. It is for this reason I think this is something that should be explained. I wish the minister would try to indicate whether or not this first survival course proceeded in a manner different from that which he expected and, instead of having married men with jobs who were receiving some kind of subsidy from their company, he found himself faced with the fact that 75 per cent of the men were unemployed and were being sent over from the welfare offices. Perhaps he could explain why the government has taken no steps to supplement the payments to these men who are now being subsidized by the various welfare departments in various parts of Canada. Surely, this is a matter of some concern to this committee.

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Chairman, as the hon. member indicated at the start of his remarks, this has been a very successful program. I believe the people connected with it are of that opinion. The militia unit commanders and the members of the militia who have been concerned with carrying out this program in all parts of Canada I have visited have all expressed satisfaction with the calibre of the men who took this training, with the interest they took in the course, the progress they made and the skills which they attained. The hon. member seems to have some idea that the program was designed as

a relief measure and so we should have taken into account the fact that some men would have large families—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hellyer: Was that the purpose?

Mr. Harkness: —and so provided funds to support them. The program was never designed as a scheme of this sort. The purpose of the scheme was set out quite clearly and definitely at the time it was undertaken, as was the amount of pay which would be received by the men taking the course. The rate of pay was set out as that of an army private plus the ordinary living out subsistence allowance of \$65 per month. It was quite clear that that was all that was to be paid to anybody who took the course and that is what was paid.

In so far as the people who took the course are concerned, upwards of one third of the people who have enrolled in the course so far had jobs of some sort or another. A little over two thirds of the men did not have jobs at the time they enrolled. Now, I do not see why anybody should hold that against these men. The general purpose of the course, as I indicated at the time it was announced, was to produce as large a body of men as we practically could who were trained in survival skills. Of the men who have taken this course, a considerable number who were released from their normal employment by their employers, who in some cases were provincial or civic governments and in some cases private firms, for the express purpose of helping to organize survival methods in their organization, have been employed in that sort of activity since taking the course.

The hon. member asked what was happening to these people, how they were going to be used. Well, there are quite a number of them who are putting what they learned to use in that way. One of the purposes of the course and one of the hopes I expressed at that time was that a good proportion of the men who took the course would join the regular militia units. The hon. member seemed to indicate this was not the purpose of the course, but it was one of the purposes of the course to have as many of these people as possible join the regular militia units.

The reason for this hope was that survival operations are the responsibility of the army in Canada. The matter of rescuing people and so on is the direct responsibility of the army, both the regular army and the militia. The number of people in the regular militia units is not sufficient and has not been sufficient to properly carry out the rescue and survival operations with which they were charged.