

for a long time in advance and then we requisition on the Department of Labour for certain numbers of personnel who are physically fit and in certain other categories to be turned over to the army. Those who volunteer after being taken into the N.R.M.A. depots count against the quota and are later diverted into the training stream, while the others are handled through the N.R.M.A.

Mr. GREEN: The others simply go as N.R.M.A.?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Until they volunteer.

Mr. GREEN: You said something about setting up a Canadian employment corps of N.R.M.A. men who are not in physical categories which would enable them to do any fighting. Is that Canadian employment corps to serve abroad or only in Canada?

Mr. POULIOT: While the general is looking up that information perhaps I might be allowed to ask one question.

Mr. GREEN: I do not mind permitting the hon. member for Témiscouata to ask one question if it is distinctly understood that it is only one and that I can then finish my questions.

Mr. POULIOT: It will take only a fraction of a minute.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green) has the floor.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I am afraid that I did not bring with me the particular table I wanted to deal with that question. The question was as to these employment companies that are being set up. What we propose to do is to gather into these employment companies the personnel of the N.R.M.A. who are in the lower physical categories, men who are not fit for training for the combat units, and it is from these companies that we will seek to discharge the requisitions for men to do work of national importance which are being passed on to us. They will be given a reasonable amount of military training, but from then on we propose to get work done by them to help out in all the business of the country in so far as we can. The hon. member will recall that I prescribed two very important safeguards with respect to that work. The first of these safeguards was that somebody other than myself who was in a better position to judge would say that the task was of national importance. The other was, because I am deeply concerned with safeguarding the rights of labour and getting back to our ordinary conditions as quickly as

we can, that the Minister of Labour should tell us whether by doing the work requested we were interfering either with labour or with the standards of wages of labour. If so, we would clear out and do something else. But you cannot keep men in inactivity. If you have men and you have to keep them, which is the job which has fallen on my shoulders, you must have useful work for them to do or they will deteriorate.

Mr. BRUCE: Why not send them overseas?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: That may happen, sir.

Mr. GREEN: General McNaughton, you said that in the British army these men were sent abroad and did work behind the lines.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Yes.

Mr. GREEN: Why cannot you do the same thing with this Canadian employment corps?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: That may very well happen.

Mr. GREEN: But is it going to happen or is it not?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: It depends on planning.

Mr. GREEN: Is it your intention to send them over?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: If they are required to do work behind the lines, if that is part of our commitment that we have assumed, as we balance things up from time to time, I would—

Mr. GREEN: Do you think they are required at present?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: You are asking me, if I may say so, to pass judgment on a thing which my present office does not require. To my great unhappiness I have ceased to be a soldier. I have come to a position where—

Mr. GREEN: I suppose you are now just a politician like the rest of us.

An hon. MEMBER: Cheap stuff.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I have come to a position where I take my advice from the competent military advisers who are provided me and I act on that advice.

Mr. GREEN: Did your military advisers advise you that these home defence troops should not be sent overseas?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Mr. Speaker, I cannot complete—

Mr. GREEN: You also said that some of these N.R.M.A. men in Canada are to be put