

it has any relation at all to Canadian soil; it may have something to do with other countries, but certainly it is entirely foreign to Canada, and I do not think we want to see any of it here.

It is quite true, on the other hand, that if the only consideration in granting a commission is grades in the courses, those who do better than others are perhaps entitled to rewards, as in other walks of life. Nevertheless, when the men are serving together in the same aircraft there is an invidious distinction, which I think should be done away with. It was suggested by one of my colleagues that it might be better to adopt the United States system of appointment of aircrew to become flight officers with the equivalent of warrant officer's rank, and subsequently they could earn their commissions. I am not positive on that point, but I have heard it said that that is the way in which the matter is handled there. Certainly, the man who graduates as a member of an aircrew is entitled to some rank which, I think, should be at least that of warrant officer; and upon proof of service, not necessarily operations over Europe but including good service in the corps, he should be entitled to rank for his commission.

As I understand it, the system in practice works that only the top third of the graduating classes are granted commissions and the remainder become sergeant pilots. Now that Canada has a larger number, of R.C.A.F. establishments and is paying for the same, the old reason of being influenced by joint costs, because Great Britain was paying a good part of the shot of the increased remuneration which officers would get, has to a large extent gone. We are running our own show to a considerable extent, and we should be able to call our own tune with regard to creating officers or not. I understand that a sergeant-pilot or an aircrew sergeant must be recommended by his commanding officer for a commission, or he may apply, under certain rules, for a commission. I should like to trespass on the privilege of the house and read from the agreement in connection with the air training plan dated at Ottawa, June 5, 1942, which I think is the last agreement. This is "Conditions of service of air crews, R.C.A.F. pupils."

1. Commissioning— . . .

(a) All pilots, observers, navigators and air bombers who are considered suitable according to the standards of the government of Canada and who are recommended for commissions will be commissioned.

I do not see any limitation in the clause to one-third, which I understand is the practice.

Mr. POWER: It does not exist any longer.

Mr. JACKMAN: There is no limitation; you are perfectly free to create any officer or sergeant?

Mr. POWER: It does not exist any longer.

Mr. JACKMAN: On graduation, of course.

(b) The percentages of commissions given at the date of this agreement to wireless operator-air gunners, namely twenty per cent of total graduates, divided ten per cent on graduation and ten per cent after service, and air gunners, namely twenty per cent of total graduates, divided five per cent on graduation and fifteen per cent after service, will be maintained.

I might ask the committee to bear in mind, with regard to these percentages after service, that from what information I have it does not appear that the chances of being promoted afterwards are very much better than theoretical. Actually the total who have been promoted after failing to get their commissions upon graduation has not been very great.

Then:

Some flexibility will, however, be permitted to ensure that airmen in these categories who have the necessary qualifications are not excluded from commissions on account of the quota.

Well, according to the minister the quota has gone except perhaps as to the air gunners, et cetera.

Mr. POWER: I am speaking of the P.N.B.s only—pilots, navigators, bombers.

Mr. JACKMAN: The next clause has to do with procedure in getting a commission, and I think hon. members will be interested if I read it at length.

(c) Normally, the initiative in recommending an airman for a commission will rest with his commanding officer, but an airman may apply to be recommended, and, if his application is endorsed and forwarded by his commanding officer, it will receive the same consideration as if it had been initiated by the latter.

Namely, the commanding officer.

An application for a commission by an airman of the Royal Canadian Air Force, even if it is not endorsed, will be forwarded through the usual channels to R.C.A.F. overseas headquarters. The headquarters will be provided with all relevant documents and will arrange for the candidate to appear before a selection board convened by the air officer-in-chief, R.C.A.F. overseas.

In regard to that clause, I would ask the minister if what is there indicated exists anywhere at all except on paper—

Mr. POWER: You bet.