

ister of National War Services. I appreciate the last sentence of my hon. friend's remarks, to the effect that this matter should be dealt with at once.

In connection with the request for a breakdown of the reserve army, with the permission of the committee I will not place this on *Hansard* but send a memorandum to the hon. member who has requested it.

With regard to the pay and allowances of the reserve units and the number in the reserve army, I may tell my hon. friend that last year the pay and allowances were limited to 50 per cent of the strength. I am not suggesting that as the reason for the difference in the pay and allowances paid in 1940-1941 and in 1941-42. Some one asked whether there had been any increase in the reserve army, that is, the reserve army apart from the supernumeraries. I said there were about 80,000, but on February 14, the last date on which weekly returns were returned, the exact number was 78,322. The strength on March 31, excluding supernumeraries again, was 91,370, the increase being principally on account of National Resources Mobilization Act men posted directly to the unit—not as supernumeraries. Since that time enlistments have been considerable. Another month has elapsed, and I am sorry that I have not the figures up to date.

Mr. WHITE: Does the minister agree that this system of 50 per cent pay and allowances for the reserve force units should be continued? They have now to pool their pay. If a man gets full pay he receives only 60 cents. I am sure the minister will agree with me that there is no reason under the sun why these reserve force units should be expected to pool their pay. At the end of the training season, instead of a man's pay working out at \$1.30, it works out at only 75 or 80 cents. Is that system going to be continued?

Mr. RALSTON: I gave the officers commanding the reserve units on the Pacific coast the assurance that I give the committee now that the present plan for the payment of the reserve army up to strength will be continued. There will not be a cut to 50 per cent.

Mr. WHITE: Every man will get his full pay?

Mr. RALSTON: Unless he pools his pay, and that is a matter for the man. As far as we are concerned, we will pay the men who go to camp.

My hon. friend raised another point which has been raised before, with reference to

[Mr. Ralston.]

non-commissioned officers having to revert when they go overseas. My hon. friend has stated as clearly as he could, and better than I can, the reasons why this is done. The obvious reason is that there are men in England who have been working their heads off to obtain promotion, and they feel it is not quite fair that a man should come over with stripes and perhaps take a place in their unit senior to them. My hon. friend asked me to make an announcement, but I am sorry that I cannot. The matter is under active consideration by the adjutant-general in consultation with the overseas authorities. General McNaughton, when he was over here, and the chief of the general staff had a talk with regard to it, because it affects officers as well as men. I certainly will keep it in mind and endeavour to work out some possible solution. That is the most I can say.

With regard to the standard of education required for officers, I agree with my hon. friend that there are cases—he has given instances—where an officer who is not able to meet the standard of education does just as fine, or perhaps a better job than those who can meet it. The requirement for an officer is junior matriculation or some equivalent examination. I have asked the adjutant-general whether any exceptions have been made, but he cannot tell me of any. I will see if there is any possibility of making provisions for special cases. As I have said before, however, the hard cases make bad law. Once you let down the bars you are in difficulty. I do not mean that just with reference to headquarters, because we can stand the headaches if it is the proper thing to do, but you are likely to get into a lot of difficulty and have to face charges of discrimination if you begin to make exceptions.

With regard to recruiting offices, my hon. friend will find me more emphatic than he has been with regard to the necessity of the first place the prospective soldier goes into not being dirty, and being in good shape. I have asked the civilian director of recruiting, Colonel Mess, and the adjutant-general, to keep this in mind. I may say that we have erected in Canada some special recruiting offices of standard design. These will be attractive, and I assure the committee they will not be expensive. They will make up for the odd holes and corners which have had to be used in the past in some instances as recruiting offices. I agree that where possible the medical examination should take place where a man offers himself for recruiting so that he can get through in the one day. If that can be done, it is all to the good. To have an attractive recruiting office and an