

Canadian Forces Act

This returning veteran explained that during the rest periods allowed the troops little entertainment could be found. The article goes on:

The men were confined to camp, he said, because the authorities feared they might be poisoned with water or liquor. They could only sit and read in the camps.

"We had only two sports days all the time I was out there," he added, "and there was practically no sports equipment."

He also had a strong complaint about the lack of Canadian cigarettes. He said the troops could obtain British, Australian or U.S. brands, but Canadian makes were not available.

That is evidence from a man who has just come back from Korea and was interviewed in Toronto yesterday, and it bears out everything that has been said in this house. I do repeat the recommendation made the other day, which was that the government appoint an investigating committee made up of men who are not in the Department of National Defence. There are other men in other departments of the government who are thoroughly experienced in welfare work because of what they did during the last war. There are also men available from these great national agencies to which I referred earlier in my remarks. I do suggest that without any further delay a committee be set up and flown over to Korea where they can find out the situation and can make recommendations to the government upon returning so that action can be taken before the winter is over.

This promises to be a very grim winter in Korea for the Canadians who are there. It looks as though there will be very severe fighting, and these men are certainly undergoing hardships just as great as any young Canadians have ever undergone in the past. I am confident that every hon. member would like to see this situation cleared up without any further delay. I hope that the parliamentary assistant will be able to get action along these lines from the Department of National Defence right away.

There is one other matter which we find in the press today concerning the troops in Korea, and this has to do with the Minister of National Revenue. We find a report headed: "Gifts from Korea Troops Subject to Customs Duty". The article goes on to state that any presents that men send back from Korea to relatives in Canada are subject to duty unless under the value of \$5. That seems to be a provision which could very well be waived for these particular men and their loved ones. Apparently during the last war such a provision was waived. There was an order in council passed, or some other action taken, which enabled the Canadians serving with the forces abroad to send back gifts to their people free of duty, and I do not see why a similar provision should not be made at this

time covering the men in the forces in Korea and also those on duty in Europe. The Minister of National Revenue will know. There may be some reason why that cannot be done, but on the face of it one would think that this favoured treatment should be extended to the men who are overseas.

Mr. P. E. Wright (Melfort): When this bill was in committee the other day the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Knight) asked the parliamentary assistant certain questions about people who have been brought into the civil service from the permanent forces under an amendment to this act. Men who served in the first and second wars who returned to Canada but did not enter the civil service immediately but later took work in the civil service were required to pay 12 per cent of their initial salary in the civil service into a superannuation fund. Under the amendments to this act, if I understand them correctly, certain personnel who are coming into the civil service today from the permanent forces are required to pay only 6 per cent of their initial salary in the civil service.

In his explanation the other day to the hon. member for Saskatoon, the parliamentary assistant stated that this 6 per cent clause applied only to personnel who had been contributing into the permanent service pension act funds, and did not apply to others coming into the civil service who may have in some past period paid but who had discontinued their payments to the permanent service pension fund. I understand that that is not the case; that actually under this amendment personnel are being brought into the civil service from the Department of National Defence or from civil life through the Department of National Defence who are allowed to pay 6 per cent of their initial salary into a superannuation fund and yet they may not have paid the 6 per cent for a former period which they may have served in the permanent forces. I should like to know whether that is so or not, or whether all people coming into the service have been treated on the same basis. I understand that that is not so; that certain selected personnel—a small number—are getting preferred treatment under the new provisions set out in this bill.

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre): In connection with the matter dealt with by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green), it may be of interest to place on the record a summary of the correspondence that has passed between the various groups concerned with providing auxiliary services and the Department of National Defence, beginning back in August, 1950. Today the parliamentary assistant very properly and expeditiously tabled the record. It reveals a situation