

*Reinforcements*

able to get the figures of the last few days together to be of use, but I shall endeavour to give the figures to-morrow.

Mr. SLAGHT: What help did you get from the hon. member for Lake Centre?

Mr. BROOKS: Are the figures you gave of N.R.M.A. men who have enlisted for active service those of men who have been in the N.R.M.A. for some time or of men who have just recently been called up in the draft?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I could not give the break-down with any certainty, but most of the men referred to in those figures as converting from the N.R.M.A. have been there for some considerable period.

Mr. BROOKS: The figures include both men who have been recently called up and men who have been in the N.R.M.A. for some time?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: That is correct. But the majority I believe have been there for some time. I have no statistical break-down with me.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I have before me a clipping of a statement made by Major-General G. R. Pearkes with regard to the units in the Pacific command. I shall quote from the clipping and then ask the minister whether it is a fact. It is dated November 17 and quotes Major-General Pearkes as follows:

"There must be an immediate and unprecedented acceleration of recruiting among N.R.M.A. infantrymen if any adequate response is to be made within the short time General McNaughton intimated, in his appeals at Arnprior and Ottawa, was yet available."

Asked what new methods would be used to urge "Zombies" to go active, General Pearkes replied:

"God only knows. But we're going to have a try anyway."

What new methods have been put into effect since then beyond the order in council that was passed to-day?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I would say to the hon. member that probably one of the most important methods was to see by the publication of the figures that the general public of Canada had knowledge of the particular problem of the N.R.M.A. which was growing up in our midst. The second fact is that members of the community whose voices are respected and carry far have in some instances been making appeals to these men, reinforcing the appeals which I myself have made. They were doing it and getting an effect. Previously we had little help from outside. The problem seemed to me to have been largely left to the army to solve. I believe that the problem of N.R.M.A., while it is true that it is the

[Mr. McNaughton.]

army's responsibility, is also the responsibility of the general public of this country, and I have not felt that we have had much real charity and support in this work.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Speaking of charity, and in all charity, do you think the government had no responsibility under its power? I ask the question in perfect courtesy, too.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: A courteous question requires a courteous answer. I think we all, government and people, bear a responsibility when a social problem of the magnitude of N.R.M.A. arises.

Mr. BROOKS: I think your appeal was to be made to the parents and friends of the people in the localities where the men's homes were. Is that not correct?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: That is right.

Mr. BROOKS: Well, is it not true that most of these men are miles away from their homes? Many men on the Pacific coast are from eastern Canada; many of those in the east are from the west; and how would it be possible for the parents or the local people to use influence on men who are not in their own homes?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: There are letters and other communications between the boys in the camps and their people at home.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: If, as you stated this afternoon, you believe that the manpower should be secured by this new policy of persuasion, as you call it, why the introduction of this order in council at this time?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: When I made my appeal, and when the Prime Minister made his appeal, it was not only the making of the appeal that was required, but that there should have been a unity of public opinion behind that appeal. As it turns out, in place of getting support we got the opposite. I would say further to the hon. member that when I made my original appeal at Arnprior I said that it was conditional on the good will and support of the public. When persons are charged in war with responsibility for the armed forces, when persons are charged in war with responsibility for the leadership of the nation, and the public do not respond to their appeal—

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): They did in 1942.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: —it is no wonder that, if we get no support, and with the responsibility which the Minister of National Defence and the government carry for the proper maintenance, the full maintenance of