

The Militia Officers also pointed out that many members of the Militia were unemployed and could not provide themselves with boots suitable for the heavy marching associated with the annual summer training camps. It should be remembered that it has never been the policy of the Government to equip the non-permanent Militia with footwear.

Nevertheless, after much deliberation it was finally decided to introduce a supplementary estimate of \$100,000 for the purpose of procuring boots for the Militia. Unfortunately, it was not possible in the time remaining before the Royal Visit to have the boots manufactured. But, it was decided to issue a certain number of boots from the existing mobilization stores while steps were taken to replace these with the funds provided by Parliament.

Some 10,000 pairs of boots were so issued, but care was taken that supplies should not be reduced below the amount required to equip Coast defence guards who would have to be called out immediately in the event of emergency.

It would have been desirable to have additional stores adequate for the clothing of an Active Service Force. It should be borne in mind, however, that not until Parliament had met in September did the Government have authority to despatch a Force overseas. It should also be borne in mind that there was never any probability that an overseas force would be required to leave the shores of Canada at an early stage of war. It was always considered that the equipment of an Expeditionary Force - should one be necessary - could be procured at short notice when the need should arise.

On the other hand, aircraft, naval vessels, machine guns, fortification works, etc., could not be produced at short notice.

The Department made what it thought to be the best use of the funds provided. Subsequent events have justified the discretion exercised. The Canadian Active Service Force was equipped with uniforms and similar outfit in ample time for overseas service.

Criticism of the shortage of these commodities ignores the essence of the problem with which the Department of National Defence was confronted from 1936 onward in its efforts to develop an effective system of National Defence for Canada, in a short space of time with funds which, while large in relation to a Canadian budget were small in relation to the magnitude of the task of equipping a non-military country for her own national defence.

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