

of the best brains of Canada. The majority of these brilliant young men will have interrupted their education. It is the responsibility of the air force to direct the thoughts of these boys to the furtherance of their higher education and to dissuade them, as will be necessary in many cases, from breaking away from their early pre-war intentions of a university career.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this job of rehabilitation can best be done by those in charge of the building of the Royal Canadian Air Force. In conclusion, may I say: Carry on, Royal Canadian Air Force.

Mr. JACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, it would be almost redundant for me to add a humble tribute to the administration of the Department of National Defence for Air, but I am very glad to do so because I believe that the minister has given it his very best attention; he has accepted criticism where it was due, and he has never paraded the Royal Canadian Air Force or the British commonwealth air training plan as a perfect model, but has endeavoured at every turn to improve it where improvement was required. I hope that any suggestions which may come from this side he will take in that spirit as he has done in the past, for he is assured in his heart, and he knows it without anyone saying it, that there is nothing which any member of this house and any member of the Canadian public will not do to further the interests of these men over whom he has charge.

I do not think the people of Canada fully realize the debt of gratitude which they owe to the men who serve in the aircrew of the Royal Canadian Air Force, to say nothing of the men who served with the Royal Air Force and fought in the battle of Britain and in all the battles which have been waged since that time. I shall not say that the failure to realize exactly what the air force has done for us is because of poor publicity; it may be due to the fact that the air raids are now so constant, and the air battles in the past were of such frequency, that we do not realize the significance of each of these air raids which takes place.

Let us consider for a moment what is meant to Canada when an air raid of 600 planes takes place on any one of these evenings which we are now passing through. With an average crew of say eight to a plane, that means 4,800 men. Every night we have, in the number of aircrew going over Germany, a force equivalent to that which took part in the raid on Dieppe. That is something we do not realize on account of the great frequency of these air raids. And, so that we may realize how large

[Mr. Hoblitzell.]

a share is Canada's in these air raids, no less than a quarter of the aircrews that take part in the raids are R.C.A.F. personnel, serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force and Royal Air Force, and for good measure we can add another five per cent of Canadians who enlisted in Royal Air Force units. Only a few nights ago, fifty-seven of the casualties reported were boys of our own country, our own brothers and sons.

Whether anything can be done to bring the realization of this great contribution more vividly to the general public apart from those whose actual relations are engaged in it I do not know, but I feel that if it is possible to give greater publicity to the individual exploits, as well as the exploits of the corps, it should be done. I believe that the minister, if he is of the same opinion as he was last year, will agree that we must give all the personal tribute that we can, because we on this side of the Atlantic at least are used to having heroes, and it is a great inspiration to the young men serving in the force and to those who are likely to enlist to know that they have a chance of getting this glory personally, as well as serving in the common cause.

I am also glad to know the minister feels that we may make very considerable progress in the winning of this war through bombing operations alone. He shares, I think, the view of the Prime Minister of Great Britain when he says that it is something well worth trying, as long as we do not forget the other arms of the service.

One point which has been mentioned already and which will find, I believe approval among all parties of this house, is in connection with the granting of commissions and the withholding of the same to aircrew. It is an invidious distinction which grew out of the tail-end of the last war. I remember it very well, because at that time I was a boy of seventeen and I was in the Royal Air Force, as it was called then. I can remember lining up with the other young recruits, and a young lieutenant there simply picked some of us to be cadets for pilots, which meant a commission, and others to be sergeant-pilots, without any preliminaries at all. It did seem an unfair way, because those who had special influence might be able to change their position afterwards. But the distinction between commissioned officers and non-commissioned sergeants, all of whom were to serve as aircrew, grew out of the end of the last war and apparently was carried over into this war. I do not see that