

*War Appropriation—Army*

branch of the service, the artillery. Perhaps I can express it best by reading just what he wrote.

Mr. RALSTON: This is a gunner, an artillery man writing?

Mr. HAZEN: Yes. He says:

A sore point is what is known as "specialty pay" or pay for the job, specialists, etc., which is O.K. as far as it goes but it does not go far enough. Recently we have been allowed specialists pay for our G.P.O. and O. Packs., but there are still the qualified signallers who are of a much higher I.Q. than the ordinary run-of-mine man, but once on the job they get bogged down.

Mr. RALSTON: He is a little tough on the private.

Mr. HAZEN: He is talking of qualified signallers. Evidently they do not receive any specialist's pay, or they did not at that time. This letter, I might say, was written a month or two ago, or perhaps longer.

In the navy this is acknowledged and they get extra pay for such qualifications. In the signal corps it is the same, but in the artillery no, although we have signallers who are every bit as good and in numerous cases better than those in the signal corps who get paid for their job.

As a result there is little incentive to become a signaller, and they are the thing that makes an artillery regiment what it is. Without good signallers we are about as useful as we would be without guns, as we have to depend almost entirely on R. Toc and W.T. and not on line as we have not got the time to lay it or perhaps the opportunity in quick moves. It is . . . embarrassing when the wireless does not work.

I bring this to the minister's attention because it is possible there is something in it and it might be to the advantage of the service if these signallers received some additional pay.

Mr. RALSTON: The matter has been brought to my attention. I cannot make a statement about it but I know the case exactly because it was discussed with me when I was overseas last time. It was discussed by gunners, and it has been under discussion at headquarters.

Mr. BENICE: I do not know whether the matter to which I am about to refer has been brought to the minister's attention but it is of sufficient importance to bear repetition. At the present time there is a great dearth of doctors in Canada and the population generally are not able to obtain the medical assistance they need. I understand it is the policy of the administration to do everything they can to ensure that the men overseas or away from their dependents are not caused any unnecessary worry, and in regard

[Mr. Hazen.]

to social problems and questions of the kind, arrangements are made and if necessary anything that is wrong is straightened out after investigation. It so happens that the civil doctors engaged in Canada are so busy now that they are unable to treat all the cases that are brought to them. On the other hand, the doctors in the army, to my knowledge, have not in many instances enough work to keep them busy. Has the minister seriously considered trying to set up some system under which the doctors in Canada at different points would be available to look after at least the dependents of the men in the service? If in centres where the doctors are not too busy it could be arranged that these people could go to them—I do not suggest that the doctors should make any house-to-house calls, because I do not think they could do that—it would remedy a good deal of the trouble and remove the worry from the soldiers. It would provide a necessary and beneficial form of assistance to their dependents.

Another matter to which I would direct the minister's attention relates to medical categories. I have been informed that a man does not have to have the same high standards in order to obtain an A rating which it was necessary for him to have last year or the year before. Can the minister advise the committee whether or not the medical requirements within a category, such as A, have been reduced, and similarly in connection with B and so on? Will the minister also inform the committee whether or not further consideration has been given to the matter of enlisting more category C men? The C.W.A.C. was recruited for the purpose of allowing men of competent categories to go on active service. There must be a large number of men of C category who want to get into the service and who could be doing the same type of work that the C.W.A.C. women are doing. What is the attitude of the department in that regard? Are steps being taken to utilize these men?

Reference was made to the dependents' boards of trustees. In what manner are these boards set up and, generally speaking, how many people constitute the different boards in various parts of the country?

Mr. RALSTON: Answering the last question first, I am advised that there are twenty-one boards set up across the country, and that from six to ten people constitute each of the boards.

Mr. BENICE: How are the selections made?