

The Address—Mr. Pearkes

an auxiliary squadron. Years are going by and these men are beginning to lose heart. They are wondering whether a squadron will ever be authorized.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. Pearkes: Mr. Speaker, when the house adjourned for the dinner recess I was speaking about the lack of support which had been given to the formation of the auxiliary R.C.A.F. squadron at Victoria. These auxiliary or reserve units were in previous years the medium by which the miracle was worked whereby great masses of citizens from Canada were welded into military formations and were able to make so grand a contribution to the successful conduct of the first and second world wars.

It was the willingness of innumerable Canadian citizens to give up their spare time, their holidays, and their evenings in order to learn voluntarily the rudiments of military science, and something by way of a smattering of the art of leadership, that enabled them in the hour of crisis to develop those great masses of Canadian citizens who came forward into, as I said a moment ago, a really effective fighting force.

I feel the time still continues when every possible encouragement should be given to our non-permanent sailors, soldiers and airmen; and I regret it has not been possible for the government to encourage those young men from the southern part of Vancouver island, who are anxious to continue their service in the auxiliary arm of the R.C.A.F.

The government has given greater encouragement to the reserve army units than was ever given before. I say it is imperative upon the government to see that the policies which they have enunciated regarding the effective training of the officers and non-commissioned officers of those units are carried out to the letter. Before the last war, and for a number of years, the non-permanent units of this country were kept alive through the work done by the corps of officers and non-commissioned officers in those units. It is important that every encouragement be given to them to train along up-to-date lines. I believe encouragement is being given, but in some cases there is a tendency to emphasize the importance of recruiting, administration and keeping alive the traditions of the various units rather than going ahead with effective and up-to-date training.

In connection with the anxiety felt on the Pacific coast regarding the state of our defences there, as may be felt in other parts of the country as well, it was only a couple

[Mr. Pearkes.]

of years ago that Major General Worthington was appointed director and organizer of the civil defence of this country. If, as I claimed earlier in my remarks, Canada is in a position where it might become an active theatre of war, if war broke out again, then the importance of civil defence is such as has never been experienced in this land before. Some two years have elapsed since that appointment was made. I hope the minister will be able to tell us what progress has been made along these lines.

I have heard some talk about the importance of standardizing fire-fighting equipment. Unfortunately the fire departments of the various cities find their equipment is not co-ordinated. The result is that frequently when a fire occurs the fire brigades from neighbouring towns are unable to assist because their hose reels are not of the same standard or same make or size as those in the town where the fire has occurred. That is one direction in which it is imperative that some action be taken.

Also I would suggest that, in so far as the training of medical service is concerned, thought might be given to the type of casualties and injuries which might occur should this country be subjected to some modern form of attack.

I believe that in the majority of reserve units recruiting is going reasonably well. I would put forward one suggestion, however, namely that as a result of the extension of the franchise at the last general election many new groups of Canadians have now been brought within the realm of full Canadian citizenship. I feel those new groups should be encouraged to assume their responsibilities in every branch of citizenship.

On the Pacific coast we have thousands of young men of East Indian origin, their forebears having come from India, or from what is now called Pakistan. They come from martial races. These young men, born in Canada, have inherited those qualities of loyalty and courage which were so marked among the Hindus and Sikhs in the various units of the Indian and British armies. I hope a definite effort will be made to encourage these new Canadians to join with our defence forces. I know of no means whereby communism among the ranks of those men could better be combated than by having them assume the full responsibility of citizenship.

Only a few days ago I was advised that the Royal Humane Society in Canada had seen fit to recognize a young Hindu boy who had been responsible for saving the lives of two other boys in lake Cowichan. He is the son of Bal Singh, an East Indian resident of