

voluntary enlistment, is so much greater than the proportion going from any other province, that we have a right to ask that in any conscription Bill that is placed before this House, there shall be consideration of that fact. There are in Canada of native and British-born, 1,295,000 people of the military age set out in this chart, that is between the ages of 20 and 45. Of that number we are told 418,000 have enlisted; that is 32 per cent. In Ontario of that age and of those nationalities, there are 472,000, of whom 168,000 have enlisted, or 36 per cent. In Quebec there are 327,000, of whom 44,000 have enlisted, or 13 per cent. In Nova Scotia there are 84,000 men of whom 22,300 have enlisted, or 26 per cent. In New Brunswick there are 58,000 men, of whom 17,500 have enlisted, or 29 per cent. In Prince Edward Island there are 14,738 men, of whom 2,700 have enlisted, or 18 per cent. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan (that is one military district) there are 173,000 men, of whom 79,000 have enlisted, or 45 per cent. In Alberta there are 63,000 men, of whom 35,000 have enlisted, or 55 per cent. In British Columbia there are 90,000 men, of whom 39,000 have enlisted, or 43 per cent. I submit that, that being the condition of affairs, we are entitled to some guarantee in the administration of this Act that the sacrifices that have been made voluntarily in that country shall be recognized, and that the interests of these provinces and people shall be protected, as they are not protected under the wide-open provisions of this Bill.

Mr. BURRELL: I am affected in this matter much as the hon. gentleman is. Might I point out that we shall be protected to this extent, that the number of available men under the first three classes will be naturally infinitely smaller in his own province and in mine than in some other provinces.

Mr. OLIVER: Yes.

Mr. BURRELL: In the Okanagan valley, in my own constituency, about 500 men have gone to the front, and there is hardly a man of the proper age in a medically fit condition left in the whole country, so that the protection would really come naturally.

Mr. OLIVER: That is what we want—we want the protection to come naturally. But when I read the Bill, and see the exemption provision, which says that it is expedient in the national interest that the man, instead of being employed in military service,

[Mr. Oliver.]

should be engaged in other work in which he is habitually engaged, and when I listen, as I have listened during the past three days, to assertions and reiterations that the voluntary enlistment of men in this country was held up by the authority of the Government for the advantage of certain interests in eastern Canada, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am not satisfied that we, the people of western Canada, are going to get a square deal under this Bill at the hands of this Government; and it is for that reason that I ask that there be some guarantee, if guarantee can be given, on the face of the Bill. We in the West have enlisted without suggesting a complaint of any kind whatever. We have asked for nothing but the privilege of service. We have given that service as no other part of Canada has done; and now, when the honour of voluntary enlistment is to be taken away, we are to be put under a compulsory law, which, on the face of it, and in the light of the statements made in this House within the last three days, is deliberately intended for the purpose of combing our men of the West and protecting the munition factories in the East. If that is not the reason, it is easy to find words in the English language to show that it is not the reason, and put them on the face of the Bill.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: It seems to me that to carry out the hon. gentleman's view we will either have to go into minute detail, not only as to the class of person to be exempt, but as to the actual persons themselves, because there are many members of exempted classes whose duty to enter military service is just as clear as that of members of other classes who are not exempt. In my opinion we must either leave a certain discretion to the judgment of the authorities, as we do in all other matters, or we have to give details, such as the hon. gentleman from Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) could not give this afternoon. I think my hon. friend will find himself in very deep water, if he is going to give sufficient detail to enable the judge to actually identify every man according to those details. I point out to my hon. friend that the first three subsections of section 11 exempt a man on national grounds; the other three exempt him on private grounds. I also point out that, under the New Zealand Act, which, so far as selection is concerned, has worked very favourably, the exemptions are much less specific than the exemptions of the present Bill. The only exemptions under that Act are as follows:—