

physical unfitness, occurred among men who had not been in army service before, and a large percentage of whom were from urban centres. If one compares these figures with any permanent army figures generally, he will find that the latter have regard to personnel composed of more or less seasoned troops.

It must also be remembered that the figures of enlistment and the number of those discharged include the enlistment of twenty-nine companies of veterans home guards and eleven provost companies as well as numerous others which were included in the active army, but who might be in category "C1" and "C2," among whom the wastage was a good deal higher than under normal circumstances. It is asked what we are going to do. Some time ago we gave instructions for the establishment of schools for these medical boards and that men were not to be taken on the boards unless they showed themselves fully equipped and understood the army requirements.

Another thing was that the ad hoc boards, the boards set up just from time to time as necessary, were reduced in number as far as possible, and we now have standing medical boards which do nothing but examine these men and therefore can be expected to become expert at this work.

Another thing which has been done is that instructions have been given to the district medical officers that when any medical officer, be he civilian or be he army, is found lax in his examinations, his services are to be dispensed with. His examinations can be quickly checked at national defence headquarters, because arrangements have been made that all the documents come before the officer there, with even a photostat copy of what we call page 3 of the examination. A close check is being kept at headquarters, and instructions have gone out to district medical officers that they themselves must certify that the medical officers functioning in connection with recruiting have received a definite course with regard to army medical examinations and having to do with physical standards necessary in relation to the categorization of records.

I ask permission to put this on the record because the matter has been mentioned to-day, and it ought not to go abroad that medical examinations are being made carelessly.

One other point is with regard to the discharge of those who it was thought would become inefficient soldiers. There were about 5,000. Steps have been taken with regard to them. In the first place, the regulations have been changed so that the authority for the discharge of personnel rests now not with the commanding officer but with the district officer commanding, so that there will not be

any chance of a commanding officer who simply does not like a chap, or just feels that he does not fit in with the fellows around him or is not as bright as others, allowing him to go as an inefficient soldier. He has to come before the district officer commanding.

Second, instructions have been issued that more care shall be taken in connection with the enlistment of personnel. We enlisted 40,000 in six weeks last June and July, and naturally there was a good deal of crowding in connection with these enlistments. The same care could not be exercised by recruiting officers. Instructions, however, have been issued to recruiting as well as medical officers to ensure a better inquiry into fitness and efficiency in connection with the enlistment of personnel.

Third, district officers commanding have been instructed not to discharge personnel for inefficiency until every effort to make soldiers of them has failed. In the past, too many discharges have taken place because commanding officers felt they knew a better man who could take their places and naturally they were anxious to have a pukka unit, one just a bit above the average.

Mr. GREEN: Will the minister give the figures of those discharged from the forces in the different categories?

Mr. RALSTON: The Minister of National Defence gave them. Discharged as medically unfit, I gave as between nine and ten thousand. The figure is 10,829.

Mr. GREEN: Does that include the air force and the navy?

Mr. RALSTON: No.

Mr. GREEN: What about them?

Mr. RALSTON: I have not those.

Mr. GREEN: Can the minister get them?

Mr. RALSTON: I am sure the Minister of National Defence for Air and the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services will have them. My coming into the discussion at all is irregular.

Mr. GREEN: We should have that figure too.

Mr. RALSTON: My colleague gave the figures for the army. Those discharged, medically unfit, 10,829; enlisted under age, 1,073; discharged for misconduct, 520. Then there are those discharged for a number of special reasons, the chief of which is, I think, returned to civilian employment. The number is 1,289. Those discharged as not likely to become efficient soldiers number 4,067; those who were appointed to commissions in