

*Reinforcements*

to work for farmers, picking tobacco and so on. I do not dispute that all these matters were of significance in the industrial and agricultural life of the country, but I submit that these men were called up primarily to be trained as soldiers and that they should be brought back to be trained as soldiers rather than be sent out to do other work for which they would receive high rates of pay.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Does the minister have any reasons other than those given this afternoon for the failure to secure the necessary volunteers from the N.R.M.A. ranks?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I think the reasons which I gave this afternoon were sufficient to form my opinion and judgment.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: How many volunteers from other branches of the service have been transferred to the infantry since the minister has been minister?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: As I understand the hon. member's question, he wants to know the number who have been remustered since November 2?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Yes.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I regret that I have not the figures broken down in that way; it has been prepared as a cumulative figure.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Is it possible to tell me how many there were as of the first of the month, and how many there are to-day? There would then be no difficulty in deciding how many there were at that time.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: That would mean cabling our staffs in England, because most of the remustering has taken place on the other side.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Have you the figures for Canada?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: We could not give figures for November at this time.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Did you give instructions to the district officers commanding of the various districts that men in other branches of the service regardless of their rank so long as they were non-commissioned officers or privates should be transferred to the infantry? Have you given such orders during the last two weeks?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The question of the hon. member, as I understand it, is, did I give those orders?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Yes.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The particular orders for remustering fit men, non-commissioned

officers included, were given before I took over the department. I reviewed those orders and continued them in force under the circumstances.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Any man who was a volunteer and who was remustered into the army, regardless of whether he had non-commissioned rank or not, was remustered as a private; is that not correct?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: As to the non-commissioned officers and the specialists who were remustered to infantry, the recommendation was and is that they should retain their rank during training and for six months after posting, by which time it was thought that if they were up to the standards of that rank they would continue to hold it. To make the pay side of that effective requires an amendment to Financial Regulations and Instructions, which amendment has been signed, has gone forward and will be effective for the men concerned from the date on which they were remustered.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: And has authority also been sent out that all the non-commissioned officers in the N.R.M.A. who may enlist in the active army shall retain their rank?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Yes; the answer is in the affirmative; they are treated in the same way. It is in all cases men who have gained their stripes as N.C.O.'s. It is well to keep them before the commanding officer of the unit to which they go.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The minister stated this afternoon that he was hopeful that by proper persuasion the N.R.M.A. army would be very considerably reduced. May I then ask how many N.R.M.A. men have enlisted since the minister took over?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The hon. member asked me if I am hopeful that with a new approach the N.R.M.A. can be persuaded to convert to general service.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: No, I did not ask that at all. My question was, in view of the hopeful attitude of the minister as expressed earlier this month, have events justified it? How many N.R.M.A. men have since enlisted for active service?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: From the 1st to the 4th of November—a four-day broken week—96; for the week ending November 11, 173; for the week ending November 18, 280. In one camp where the work has been well organized there were over 185 converted to general service during yesterday and to-day. If the hon. member will excuse me, I have been busy with other affairs and have not been