

*War Appropriation*

My husband has no knowledge of this letter. I hope that it will in no way interfere with his chances of advancement, if he has any. He has the ambition, the ability and the incentive to get ahead. All he needs is a mind free of worry and a few of the "breaks."

I think that puts the case better than I could put it. I would ask the minister, if there are any cases of this kind—and I presume there are, since this is an intelligent, well written letter—of men in this position, doing tradesmen's work, with the rank of sergeant but the pay of a private, and with the families receiving the allowance of a private, to take steps to see that justice is done.

I should like also to add my voice to what has been said in this house already, asking that something be done to give the dependents of men serving in the armed forces an additional bonus or additional pay to meet the increased cost of living. It does seem invidious that we should provide—and quite properly—that men in industry should receive the cost of living bonus, and not provide that bonus for the dependents of our soldiers, sailors and airmen, for the aged or for the pensioners of the last war, who so frequently to-day languish in semi-poverty. I am urging that we do something to meet this situation. After all, these people in the lower income brackets certainly deserve a cost of living bonus more than some of our own high-salaried officials who are in receipt of a cost of living bonus from this government. Certainly we should do justice by those who are serving us in industry and in the forces.

Mr. McIVOR: I have a word or two to say, Mr. Chairman, because I believe one or two things should be emphasized. When boys are taken into the army, or when they volunteer for service, parents wonder just what their surroundings will be and what temptations they will have to meet. I should like to express my appreciation of the work that has been done by the Department of National Defence in looking after the welfare of our men in all directions. A man may be well looked after materially and physically but there may be that one thing lacking that would make him miss becoming a real soldier. I should like to pay tribute to the work that has been done by the chaplain service in the army, the navy and the air force. The best men have been chosen, not one-day-a-week men but young men who are ready and willing at all times to give service. This is not only true of the chaplains; it is true also of the Y.M.C.A., of the Salvation Army and of all the other religious organizations represented.

[Mr. Coldwell.]

Many parents are also anxious about the wet canteen. My position in this matter is well known, but I hope I may never be guilty of talking about anything in this house about which I know little or nothing. I have some data with regard to a canteen in one of our training camps, which I should like to give the committee. In this canteen the men consume five bottles of milk for every bottle of beer that is sold. I think every mother and every mother's son in Canada should be proud of that. On a recent occasion in this same canteen, when the troops were confined to barracks, they drank sixty-two bottles of beer and over three hundred bottles of milk; and there were 337 men in that draft. Again, over a recent Saturday afternoon and Sunday, when 171 men were in barracks, milk outsold beer by a very high percentage. It will be remembered that one hon. member rose in his place in this house and said that in one barracks they had a wet canteen, but when the dry canteen was opened the wet canteen was put out of business. To those who fear the bogey of the wet canteen, who think that when our soldiers sign up or are called up they are going to the bow-wows, I say I am convinced that from the chaplain service right down to the canteens our soldiers are surrounded by things that will help them to work and become real fighting men.

There is another point I should like to mention. Our men in England, in every branch, prefer to serve under Canadian rather than English officers. I pay my tribute to the Englishmen. After Dunkirk they were out of almost everything; they fought on, without guns and equipment, but notwithstanding that, our soldiers prefer to serve under Canadian officers.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Last night when the leader of the opposition inquired about reserves the minister gave a comparison which, while he did not say it would be applicable to conditions to-day, I think might be misleading. He said that in 1918 about 10 per cent were composed of reserves. From his own experience he will realize that that was during the time of the final drive when we had nearly everything in the drive. He will know that in 1916 or 1917 the reserves were many times 10 per cent. I am not suggesting that he should give the actual figures of the reserves in the old country or in any theatre of war, but I do not think we should leave the public of this country self-satisfied about the matter of reserves. I am quite sure that the actual figure at this stage would be well over 10 per cent.