

War Appropriation—Army

mittee. The situation is serious, and the minister should give some indication of governmental policy in this connection. If there is one section of our population which ought to have, not simply concessions, but equality, and that is all this means, it is the armed forces of our country, and I make this appeal to the minister this afternoon in the hope that he will provide for our armed forces in Canada that equality of treatment which cannot in any sense be regarded as a concession or as something extra. Rather it must be regarded as part and parcel of that which is rightfully due to the men in our armed forces who are prepared to give, not merely their money, not just material things, but what is infinitely more precious, life and limb itself.

Mr. SLAGHT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to support the requests made by the two last speakers with regard to leave and the granting of transportation and proper provision for eating and sleeping. I have addressed the committee on previous occasions on this subject, and therefore I shall not repeat myself this afternoon. But I endorse the requests that others have made and want to record myself as supporting them.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: In supporting the suggestions that have been made by two or three hon. members, I would submit to the minister that there is at present a special reason why consideration should be given to granting free transportation on these leaves. The press has recorded that during the recent victory loan campaign no community in this country contributed more generously than did the members of the armed forces. I recall visiting, a little while ago, a camp at North Bay, an educational centre, where 700 men in the army had contributed over \$35,000 to the victory loan. I saw their pay envelopes, and man after man at that camp, after the various deductions had been made from his two weeks' pay, had pledged himself for victory loan support to the point where he was leaving himself only two dollars a week to carry on. Under these circumstances many of these men cannot possibly afford to pay their way back home when they go on leave. I sincerely ask the minister to give the matter consideration. I am sure that the railways and the country can afford to do this on behalf of our men.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: I wish to endorse everything that the previous speakers have said. I should also like to bring to the attention of the minister the request which has come from the soldiers who are residents

[Mr. Graydon.]

of British Columbia. I think they are being unfairly treated in the length of time they are given when going home on leave. I understand that previously the air force got a longer time for leave than the army and the navy, but I am informed by the parliamentary secretary that that has been changed and that all branches of the armed forces are now on an equal footing with regard to the length of their leaves. I am entirely in accord with that. I think all branches of the armed forces should be treated equally in the matter of length of leave. But the soldiers of British Columbia should in addition be allowed travel time. I admit that this should apply equally to the soldiers who live in eastern Canada and are posted far away from home, on the west coast, let us say, but they have the advantage of passing through a beautiful part of Canada which they never saw before when they go home on leave, and that helps to make up for the shortness of their leave.

As the minister well remembers, during the last war, if you were in France and were going on leave and gave an address in Ireland, you got three days extra allowed for travel time, and if you were going to Scotland you got two days extra for travel time. I well remember that the minister and I were always getting ready to go to Ireland to get those three extra days, but we never got there. All the soldier associations in British Columbia have written, I presume, to all British Columbia members asking that they be granted travel time in addition to their leave. We are not asking for extra leave for our men. It seems only reasonable that a man from British Columbia who has been trained on a corvette at Halifax or in the air force on the eastern coast of Canada should be granted travel time in addition to his leave, because it takes him four days to get home and four days to get back, and that leaves him only one or two days at home. I think every hon. member will agree that this is a reasonable request. We are not asking for extra leave for the men from British Columbia or from the far west, include Alberta if you like. We are simply asking for travel time, so that they may have an equal length of time to spend at home. I think it is a reasonable request. I hope the minister will have something to say about it.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I should like to support what has been said by hon. members who have spoken with regard to the accommodation for soldiers travelling on the trains, and free transportation. I have particularly noticed travel conditions on the trains