

ing the committee has been laid on the table of the House, and hon. gentlemen can see in detail what were proposed as its duties.

Another committee was formed called the Committee on Reconstruction and Development, of which my hon. friend, Hon. A. K. Maclean, is vice-chairman. He has devoted much attention and study to the duties thus entrusted to him. That Committee was established for the purpose of making recommendations respecting transportation, methods of raising revenue, encouragement of thrift, conditions of labour, the service of womanhood both during and after the war, and other cognate matters.

Now as to what we have actually done since these committees have been formed. One of our first acts was the creation of a Department of Immigration and Colonization, over which Mr. Calder presides. Up to the present, there has not been opportunity for any great work of organization or development in that Department. Nevertheless, the minister has surveyed the general aspects of the problem, and more than that, has discussed them pretty thoroughly with the provincial governments. He is assured of the co-operation of every provincial government of Canada in his work, and it is hoped, and indeed expected, that at a later date, further conferences will be held at which plans will be more fully matured and discussed.

There was cast upon us immediately the administration of the Military Service Act. We all realize that in certain communities in this country there was a very strong public opinion against the principle which was embodied in that Act, and the numerous appeals which were provided for made its operation more difficult than was anticipated when it was passed. Very elaborate regulations have been prepared by the Military Service Council from time to time, and have been approved. These will be discussed, it may be, in due course, but in the meantime it is enough for me to say that since the Act was proclaimed, about the 13th October last, we have enlisted in Canada 36,342 men, and 26,839 have been sent overseas during that time. Of 36,342 men so enlisted, 28,396 were enrolled directly under the Military Service Act, and 7,946 have been obtained through the British-Canadian Recruiting Mission in the United States. I should further add that of the 28,396 men so enrolled, 3,895 have been apprehended for failing to report.

I feel it my duty to add that our forces in France are maintained to-day at full strength. The Canadian Expeditionary

Force in France was never at greater strength than to-day, and more than that, it was never more determined or more confident.

The Minister of Overseas Service has given attention to the return of men to Canada who are not fit for active service, and a recent cable from him informs me that he expects to return to Canada within the next few months from 20,000 to 25,000 men. He gives me further particulars in a letter, dated the 24th day of February last, and received only a few days ago, in which he discusses the subject. He says:

As I cabled you a few days ago, in view of the labour situation in Canada, and in the interests of economy, I have insisted upon as many as can be spared and who are in low categories, being returned. I have had an Officer, Col. J. A. Gunn, D.S.O., who has special qualifications, appointed, under the Adjutant-General, to go through the forces for the purpose of combing out such men.

There is always room for a very large number of men who are in categories B2 and B3, and who are not fit for the trenches, to be used in connection with work in hospitals, road-making, and in a hundred and one other ways, and whose services are necessary. At the same time I think it justifiable that not too many of these men should be retained over here, not only for the reasons I have named but in order that there will be fewer to transport when the war ends.

We have taken up the question of the registration of the manhood and womanhood of Canada. This has been the subject of more than one conference with labour organizations. A Registration Board has been established under the chairmanship of Senator Robertson; it is proceeding actively with its work, and we hope for good results in the not distant future. The services which this board will perform will be useful for a great many purposes. It will be useful in the co-ordination and maintenance of essential industries. It will be useful for the purpose of giving us a fuller enumeration than has hitherto been available of those persons throughout Canada who are subject to call under the Military Service Act.

The increased production of food is a vital question, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Crerar) has worked at that problem with the greatest possible industry and with very great ability. He has taken up the subject with the provincial governments and has secured thorough co-operation on their part. I could not do better than give to the House the substance of a memorandum which I asked from him to-day. The memorandum contains the following information:

At the conference of the provincial premiers on the 15th and 16th of February last, a plan