

*War Appropriation*

Mr. RALSTON: I think I can say I have not anything whatever to do with the method or way in which they are called up. I make a request of the Minister of National War Services in which I say that I hereby make a requisition for blank men for military training service on the blank of blank, details of which are set out in the annexed schedule.

Then in the schedule I say that I want so many men at the basic training centres at X, Y and Z; the number required of English-speaking, and the number required of French-speaking; so many at such other training centre, and so on, and so on. Each training centre is itemized. That is to say, a distribution is made between the training centres. But there is no statement whatsoever as to the age groups which are to be called.

Mr. HOMUTH: That is up to the Department of National War Services?

Mr. RALSTON: Yes, entirely.

Mr. GREEN: Has the army nothing to say about the age groups which it is to get into the forces?

Mr. RALSTON: No.

Mr. GREEN: Should the army not have some opinion?

Mr. RALSTON: The army has an opinion, in this way, that a proclamation is made on the recommendation of the Minister of National War Services that men are to be called up, up to such and such an age. Within the ambit of that proclamation the Minister of National War Services calls them up.

Mr. GREEN: Can the minister say the numbers of men available in the different age groups? Has the government figures on that?

Mr. RALSTON: I am sure it has, but I do not have them with me. That information is gathered together in two places, namely, the Department of National War Services and, now particularly, by the director of national selective service.

Mr. WHITE: Will the number of men who are going to be called in the next few months greatly exceed the number called in the past year? The return I have, dated April 20, 1942, indicates that there had been only 44,846 called. If there are not going to be more than that called in the next year, you will certainly not exhaust the age limit from twenty-one to thirty.

Mr. RALSTON: My hon. friend must not be sure about that. I am advised, just as my hon. friend is advised, that it will not be long before we shall exhaust the age groups. Up to what date is the hon. member referring?

[Mr. White.]

Mr. WHITE: This is dated April 20, 1942.

Mr. RALSTON: The last call is what date?

Mr. WHITE: It does not say.

Mr. RALSTON: I think it would be April, as my hon. friend knows. Generally speaking, what we are planning for is to train 15,000 or more men a month—that is, 180,000 a year. That is, those who are general service men, and those called under the National Resources Mobilization Act.

Mr. BOUCHER: The minister said there was going to be selection by lot; when does that come into effect?

Mr. RALSTON: I cannot say. I believe that is another announcement which was made by the Minister of National War Services. That announcement was made at the time the proclamation was passed extending the age limit to thirty. I do not know when it is going into effect.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): The Prime Minister announced it in his statement to the house.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): The minister referred to the calling up of 180,000 a year for general service, and in the home defence. In what ratios would they be called—fifty-fifty?

Mr. RALSTON: No; as a matter of fact, I am making an absolute minimum of 5,000 a month under the National Resources Mobilization Act. There will always be enough to fill up the 15,000. But suppose there are 12,000 enlisted for general service in the month, I would still call the 5,000 under the National Resources Mobilization Act. I want the committee to understand that we are limited there only by training facilities and instructors. There are not unlimited training and instruction facilities. We are extending our training centres by 50 per cent. In fact we are doing more than that, and in some instances we are going back to the custom at the time of the last war. That is to say, we are taking a unit which is partly trained and sending men to it to train with that unit, after having them paraded at the basic training centre, in order that we may have more training facilities. As a matter of fact, some of the men called are going to special training centres which will have units to take charge of the training.

I am mentioning that only to indicate that we are allowing some flexibility in the matter of training accommodation in order to see to it that all the general service men who are enlisted are trained, and that we