

DISTURBANCE at KINMEL PARK.

The Ministry, Overseas Forces of Canada, issues the following statement in respect to the incidents at Kinmel Camp.

In view of the splendid discipline and record uniformly maintained by Canadian troops since the beginning of the war in England and France, the incident at Kinmel Park is very deeply regretted at Headquarters, Overseas Military Forces of Canada. It is considered that in comparison with others the discipline amongst Canadian troops has been of a high order. It is greatly regretted that some of the reports of the incident have been exaggerated.

Immediately after armistice, Kinmel Park was secured as a concentration area through which Canadian troops passed on their way to Canada, being situated conveniently to Liverpool, their embarkation port. There all documentation is completed and troops sorted into drafts according to their destination in Canada.

Ships Fall Short.

Considering the shortage of shipping the Canadian authorities have congratulated themselves upon the splendid record which has been made, on the whole, in despatching troops to Canada. In the month of February, however, the Ministry of Shipping were unable to furnish sufficient ships to carry out the programme as promised to Canadians. Owing to the programme in February and early in March having fallen short by fully one-third, there occurred a "backing up" from Kinmel Park through the areas in England and through to France. This has caused very great disappointment to Canadian soldiers who have been overseas for periods ranging up to four years or more without leave to their homes.

The withdrawal of some ships and postponement of sailings of others from time to time, particularly after soldiers had been documented and medically boarded, based on the shipping allocated, has been very trying to the drafts, and this is what it is considered led chiefly to the disturbance which occurred.

Immediately upon the matter being reported to the Chief of the General Staff, Lieut.-General Sir Richard Turner, V.C., K.C.B., etc., he went to Kinmel Park and addressed the men in fifteen different places. They seemed to appreciate his explanations, and there are not likely to be any further disturbances.

No Further Delay.

There are at Kinmel Park approximately 15,000 all ranks who have been despatched there as being the last stop before boarding ship for Canada. Had the number of men been able to embark in February according to the programme which it was confidently thought could be carried out, the trouble would not have occurred, but the shipping situation, owing to strikes and for other reasons, is admitted to be an extremely difficult matter to control. It is, however, hoped by the Canadian authorities that there will not be a recurrence of the delays which have hitherto taken place.

It is not attempted in the slightest degree to excuse the misconduct of the men who took part in the disturbance. Many of the offenders have already been placed under arrest, who, with the others involved, will be rigorously dealt with. During the disturbance there was a certain amount of damage done, and it was discovered that civilians were concerned. Up to the present twelve of these civilians have been arrested and handed over to the civil authorities.

No V.C. Killed.

During the disturbance there were killed three rioters and two men on picket duty. There were twenty-one wounded, of whom two were officers. There is no foundation for the report that a Major, who is a V.C., has been either killed or injured.

The troops at Kinmel Park are concentrated in "wings" representing the Military Districts in Canada to which they will proceed. They are not in their original units, these wings being composite formations consisting of personnel belonging to many different units. This sorting out is done in deference to the wishes of the authorities in Canada, in order to avoid delay when the men reach the Dominion.

There has been some alleged dissatisfaction because of troops drawn from Canada under the Military Service Act getting priority over those who have seen longer service. The troops who were in the Canadian Corps at the time of armistice are being returned to Canada by units, in the formations that then existed, the first to return being a small number which were embarked on March 1st.

Soldiers not in the Corps, such as casualties, Railway and Forestry Troops, and others, where available, are demobilized on the principle of "longest service, first demobilized—married men having the preference."

A Court of Enquiry has been convened to make a thorough investigation into all circumstances in connection with the disturbance, of which Brig.-General J. H. MacBrien, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.P., is President.

CHINA'S UNDEVELOPED WEALTH.

In the light of the constantly-predicted exhaustion of the world's coal supply the following is of interest:

"For the past twenty years the world has heard marvellous stories of China's vast wealth in coal, yet China to-day imports more than it exports. The figures for 1917 show 1,000,000 tons exported and 1,400,000 tons imported, yet, according to V. K. Ting, director of the Geological Survey of China, a minimum estimate of China's wealth in coal indicates that it is sufficient to supply the world's consumption, at its present rate of 1,000,000,000 tons a year, for a period of 1,000 years. Probably no other statement made concerning China would demonstrate more forcibly than this the backwardness of the country in modern industrial development. Coal is known to occur in every Province of China.

"One reads in Chinese history that several centuries before the beginning of the Christian era the banners of China were carried to the Caspian Sea, there to meet the banners of Rome, and that the way was thus paved for China's silk and iron in European markets. The Shansi iron industry is claimed by a Chinese writer to be the oldest in the world. Like many others of the great resources of China, the country's deposits of iron ore have been but little developed. Dr. H. Foster Bain, assistant director of the United States Bureau of Mines, who spent some time in China investigating its mineral resources, estimates that China has 400,000,000 tons of iron ore available and suitable for modern furnace reaction and an additional 300,000,000 tons that might be treated by native methods.

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