

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: How long do you intend to proceed with the volunteering before you ask for the first draft under the order in council?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: It would be a matter of days, as soon as the detailed plans have been prepared.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Will the men to be secured by recombining the general service be as effectively trained for service as the men who have been trained in the N.R.M.A.?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The men who are being combed out from the general services will in many cases have to go back for retraining, and that is why they will be coming into the stream later on.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Will the application of the policy you have announced, that is, securing as many as possible by voluntary enlistment before applying the order in council, provide the 5,000 that are needed as quickly as would an immediate application of the order in council?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The hon. member wants to know whether we can get them more quickly by slapping on the order in council and pulling them out than we can by waiting until they volunteer. The action will be governed by the need. There will be no use in proceeding with drastic measures except to fill up a ship as it becomes available.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Can you state what delay there will be before the 5,000 will be available under the policy you have announced?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: No, I cannot tell you.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: You will admit that it will require more time to secure those 5,000 men under the policy you announced than it would by applying the order in council?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Possibly, but the time element is fixed in relation to the sailings than can be arranged.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Is there any appreciable shortage of reinforcements at the present time on any of the fronts on which Canadians are serving?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I would be loath to give that information in open session. When I give these figures to hon. members I plan to give them in great detail, but I do not think they should be made public.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): But the situation is as has been suggested, that there is a shortage?

[Mr. McNaughton.]

Mr. McNAUGHTON: As I said this afternoon, there is no shortage in any armed service with the exception of the infantry. In the infantry as a whole there is an anxiety about a prospective shortage in January because of the time required for training, the flow of the reinforcement stream and so on. I do not mind admitting that because, with the action which has been taken, that will be corrected before it becomes a menace to the continuity of our operations. Then there was another prospective shortage in connection with the stream flowing into the reinforcement pool.

Mr. HOMUTH: A complete change of policy.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: Then there is a difficulty developing with the French-speaking regiments which have been through some very hard fighting.

Mr. HOMUTH: General LaFlèche will look after that.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: My next question may be similar to the last one which you felt you could not answer. Is there any remustering taking place overseas at the present time in order to make men from certain units available as reinforcements for the infantry?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The planned programme of remustering from the other arms to the infantry is approaching completion.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Am I to understand that at the present time men are being remustered overseas to be used as immediate reinforcements for the infantry?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: After retraining, of course.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: What is the minimum time that would elapse between the time a man is remustered from the artillery overseas and the time he goes into action with the infantry?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: There is a minimum of six weeks for remustering from artillery to the infantry, six weeks or more, depending on the ability of the man to pass the tests.

Mr. HOMUTH: Wait a minute. That is not according to the facts. That is not the truth.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. HOMUTH: I am not going to sit down. I rise to a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The minister, who has been given the privilege of coming in here, makes a certain statement with regard to the training of men who leave the artillery and go into the infantry, and I say to him—