

for East Elgin (Mr. Ingram) has spoken about. Some military people in my constituency belonging to the 30th regiment, feel very strongly about this matter. They think it will be most unwise to establish central armouries at the headquarters of the regiment, and I understand that they have communicated that view to the minister. They think it would be a mistake to build a large armoury in the city of Guelph, and this notwithstanding the fact that some of the people holding that view live in the city of Guelph themselves. They spoke to me about it. They expressed the belief that it would be better to provide accommodation at the company headquarters and not at the headquarters of the regiment. When I was home during the recess I was spoken to about it, and I know there is quite a strong feeling in the regiment that instead of erecting a large building at the headquarters of the regiment the minister should provide accommodation at the company headquarters. Will the minister tell us what his policy is in regard to that matter?

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I agree with the recommendation of the Major General that we should provide armouries, or suitable rooms, at the company headquarters, and on the strength of that recommendation, rifles will be immediately issued to the rural battalions and disposed of in that way. I do not think it will be necessary to construct a building in all cases, perhaps not in many cases, because suitable rooms can be found. That is the policy which has been adopted.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I understand that about a month ago a delegation from Montreal composed of the officers of the Montreal regiments came up to Ottawa and urged the establishment of a military school. Has any progress been made in that connection?

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I will have to refer my hon. friend (Mr. Lemieux), I think, to the hon. Minister of Public Works, as well as my hon. friend from Toronto (Mr. Clarke). As a matter of fact, what my hon. friend says is quite correct, and I may say to him that I consider it a matter of importance that there should be a depot established at the most important centre of trade and population in Canada, Montreal. The matter has not been fully discussed yet, and I think it would be premature to say what would be done this year.

Mr. CLARKE. I wish to direct the attention of the Minister of Militia and Defence to the report of the chief engineer of his department respecting military buildings. This report is very pregnant now, and if the recommendation which the chief engineer made were carried out we would know whom to hold responsible for the unreasonable delays which have occurred. The report says:

The present system by which the Public Works Department construct all military buildings is very unsatisfactory, and considerable trouble and delay is occasioned thereby. I would strongly urge the necessity of having the construction, as well as the maintenance and repairs of these buildings under the charge of the engineer branch of the Department of Militia and Defence.

Might I ask the minister: What is the policy of the department respecting this recommendation? Has the government decided to carry it out or not?

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I have already stated that I have no hesitation in saying that I believe that it would be in the public interest to have the construction of military buildings under the control of the Militia Department. So far no action has been taken with reference to that.

Mr. CLARKE. This would be a very good time to carry out the recommendation made by the officer of the department.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. It would require an Act of parliament.

Mr. CLARKE. We could rush that through in very short order if absolutely necessary. There is a good opportunity for doing so just now. I find that the chief superintendent of stores also makes a report in reference to the condition of military store buildings which emphasizes the necessity for a change in the present method of constructing and maintaining militia buildings. This officer says on page three of his report:

Store Buildings.

Reference is requested to recommendations on this subject, in previous reports. New store buildings are urgently required in Toronto and Kingston. Those now in use are constructed of wood, very old, and in constant need of repair. No proper care can be taken of the valuable material stored in them.

I would remind the Minister of Militia and Defence that so deficient is the military store accommodation in the city of Toronto, that some of the municipal buildings have been given to the department in which to store valuable military supplies. In view of the reports made by the superintendent of military stores, and by the chief engineer of the department, this matter should be immediately given attention to. We should be able to hold some minister responsible for the unreasonable delay in completing the drill shed in Toronto. Now that the attention of the Minister of Militia and Defence has been called to the matter, and now that he has assumed a reasonable measure of responsibility, I trust that we shall have no more cause for complaint.

Mr. BLAIN. Would the Minister of Militia and Defence now answer my question with regard to a drill shed in Brampton.