

who do the preliminary counselling prior to discharge and officers of the Department of Labour who are especially assigned to handle the placement of veterans through the National Employment Service.

Recognizing that government machinery can go only so far in guiding the rehabilitation of individuals, we have sponsored and assisted in the formation of voluntary committees of private citizens in all principal cities and towns throughout the country. The number of such committees is now in excess of 650, and we have had their leading members in for consultation on two occasions. I wish to pay my tribute to the several thousand men and women drawn from all classes of the community who have given of their time and effort without stint to assist ex-service men and women in their rehabilitation problems that fall outside the scope of legislation, or that require the guidance and help of members of the veterans' own communities.

We have several types of specialized advisory committees dealing with the selection of those who may be considered qualified for settlement on the land, with the valuation of properties to be purchased by the Veterans' Land Act Administration, and with the granting and expenditure of re-establishment credit. The work of these committees is invaluable to the veterans because it insures to them the practical advice of experienced men and women of affairs, as well as that of the departmental counsellors and vocational guidance staff.

I think also that this is an appropriate point at which to give you some concise statistical records of the solid achievements of the program which is now being submitted to you for revision and consolidation in parliamentary enactments.

The latest available discharge statistics are those for the quarter which ended on June 30 last. At that date the number of members of the forces, men and women of all three services, discharged to civil life was 239,919. As the rate of discharge has been greatly accelerated since the end of the war in both Europe and the Far East, I am sure we should not be far out in estimating that the number today is in excess of 300,000.

As at July 31, the Department of Labour has a record of 287,482 placements in employment of ex-members of the forces since April, 1942, when the keeping of separate records was begun.

While this figure is an impressive record of achievement, it is not entirely valid as an indication of the number of veterans of the present war placed in employment for three reasons:—

1. It includes veterans of the former war.
2. It includes replacement of the same individuals.
3. Many discharged persons either go back to their former jobs, return to their own farms or businesses, or find work unaided.

But there is another test which by elimination shows conclusively that men and women discharged from the forces during the past two or three years have found their places in civil life speedily and effectively. That is the number registered as in search of employment and unplaced.

On July 31, that figure stood at 11,306. As discharges had by that time attained the rate of more than 20,000 a month, it is apparent that the number unplaced represents a normal turn-over that is keeping pace with demand.

This is further corroborated by our departmental records of "Out-of-Work Benefit". Newly discharged persons who are unable to find reasonably suitable employment are entitled to this benefit 39 days after discharge, that is, nine days after expiry of the period covered by rehabilitation grant.

The number on "Out-of-Work Benefit" on July 31 was only 599 in the whole of Canada. This is no exceptional figure. The greatest number we have ever had on out-of-work benefit at the end of any month since April, 1942, was 1,038.