

some one to say, "Your businesses are closed up; you must only provide protection enough for that. The rest of you must go and fight the fire. There is transportation to be taken care of and there is equipment for the men who go to do the work." Where is that direction to come from? Who is to give the instructions? Who is to provide the food? We have no field kitchens. Who will provide hospital care? There are not sufficient ambulances. There are many things that have to be taken into consideration, and that should be organized now. If this government is not responsible, then the responsibility should fall upon some one person. I know that in case of a forest fire the provincial government has the right to call out every man in the province to fight it, but is the provincial government going to assume that responsibility if the fire is the act of an enemy? I call the attention of hon. members to these matters not to alarm the people at home but to point out that this is a possibility which should be prepared for now, and that we should not wait until the time actually comes when action is needed. We must not take the attitude, "You first, my dear Alphonse; after you, my dear Gaston." It must be the responsibility definitely of someone now to make these necessary arrangements; for who is there who will say that it is not going to happen? If we can get some assurances on this point, it will be a great relief to the people on the island.

Mr. STIRLING: Does the hon. member look upon it as a four months' menace—June, July, August and September?

Mr. MAYHEW: June, July, August and September.

Mr. STIRLING: A four months' menace.

Mr. MAYHEW: Yes.

Mr. POULIOT: Has the minister some information to give regarding E615180, a soldier who had six months' leave from the Department of National War Services at the beginning of April but was never notified of it, and instead of that was sent to Nanaimo, British Columbia?

Mr. RALSTON: I have not the last report, but what I find is that the soldier was recommended for postponement, that the postponement was approved at national defence headquarters, that the approval went to the district, and that the young man was in a unit which, as I remember, was ordered to the west. He was sent in the unit to the west, but there was a mistake of some sort or another which I am having investigated.

The recommendation was not held up. It was accepted as recommended.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. RALSTON: If I may be permitted, I am giving my hon. friend all the information I have from memory, and I shall probably have to report tomorrow fully what occurred.

I want to go on to deal with one or two other points, if my hon. friend will permit me. I wish to finish two other points made by the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough. One was regarding pay and allowances. He asked what yardstick was used whereby pay in this war was fixed at \$1.30 whereas it was \$1.10 in the last war. I am sorry I cannot tell my hon. friend. As far as the purchasing power of the dollar is concerned, that probably was higher in 1914 than in 1939. Why the increase was made to \$1.30, I cannot tell at the moment.

With regard to troops on leave he asked that some consideration be given to the fact that troops travelling a long distance have their leave cut into by the time taken in travelling. I am advised that no official allowance on account of distance is made to troops going on ordinary leave, but there is frequently an unofficial allowance made by the officer commanding the unit, who perhaps lets a man go on Friday night and gives him the week-end extra to his leave.

With regard to embarkation leave, two clear days at home are provided for and expected.

With regard to steel helmets, that matter has had and is having particular attention. My hon. friend will understand that it is something we cannot change until we are sure we have a better pattern. Patterns are being examined in Great Britain as well as here, and as soon as something is arrived at under proper tests which seems better, we certainly shall do our part in seeing that consideration is given to its adoption. The question of material of course enters into the manufacture of large numbers of these articles.

Mr. WHITE: When I asked the minister about the yardstick used in raising the rate of pay from \$1.10 to \$1.30, the point is that last November the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) in his statement said the question of this increased pay for the soldiers and cost of living bonus was under consideration. I take it from what the minister said that it is still under consideration. I would think that the first thing we should know is how