

camp. I cannot conceive it. I should like to know how much it costs the country and how it is that the internees receive so much beer.

Mr. STIRLING: The cases which the minister dealt with just now were those of students. Can he tell us with regard to those others who have been released after investigation from among those brought from Britain by Britain's permission? For instance, I am informed that there are some who, on account of their knowledge of languages, have been of considerable use; I do not know how many there are. I am further informed that besides those who have been so made use of on account of their knowledge of languages, there are still others in the camps who have been cleared by the investigators but have not yet been released. Does the minister know anything about them?

Mr. RALSTON: I do not think we have any information in National Defence as to the first class of which my hon. friend speaks. If they were released, they would be released either on parole and be required to report to the police, or be released under general parole. With regard to the second class, those who have been investigated but not yet released, I have no report on them but I shall certainly make inquiries. I shall also make inquiries regarding the matter raised by the hon. member for Témiscouata.

Mr. EDWARDS: In reference to what the hon. member for Témiscouata has just said, because a man happens to be anti-nazi it does not necessarily follow that he is pro-ally. There are some rather big internment operations in my part of the country, and it is known that within the confines of the internment camp the nazi party rules with an iron hand. They have their gestapo within the camp. It is not difficult to imagine that among those who fought us on the fields of battle, whether in North Africa or elsewhere, there are those who do not subscribe to the principles of the nazi party, and I believe that upon the discovery of such in the internment camps these same anti-nazis are given a very difficult time. But that does not put them in any different category; they are still enemies of the allied nations.

Mr. POULIOT: And they drink a lot of beer.

Mr. EDWARDS: Well, after all, they buy their beer with their own money. So far as I know, there is no restriction upon what an interned soldier can buy in Canada, in

Great Britain or in Germany with those funds which are provided to him by the interning country, whichever it may be. In other words, Canadian soldiers interned in Germany in the last war could spend what money they had available to them for luxuries or niceties such as they were able to purchase or the country afforded, and I believe the same rule applies in Canada. I have heard the same comment in discussion in my part of the country. People were wondering why there were certain kinds of fruits and candies being bought by the internees. The explanation is very simple. Each of these interned German soldiers has a limited fund, ten or fifteen or twenty-five cents a day, that is paid to him, and if he sees fit to spend his ten or fifteen or twenty-five cents a day to buy beer or chewing gum or cigarettes or whatever else is available to him, there is no law of the land that would deny him the right to have it. I think that is recognized by all countries which are involved in this fight.

I rose, however, primarily, to direct a question to the minister with respect to a certain class of people with whose ideas I confess I have little sympathy, but for whose religious convictions, if they are in truth founded on beliefs of the mind or the spirit or the heart, I have every respect. I refer to the so-called conscientious objectors, more familiarly known as the "conchies". In the section of the country to the west of me we had camps where men of this category were interned or required to do alternative service. I think even the devil is entitled to his due; and while I hold no brief for the conscientious objectors as such, I was pleased, indeed I was astounded, to learn at first hand of the favourable impression which these so-called conscientious objectors created in the minds of those who were charged with their internment. I was told and have every reason to believe that they were doing excellent work, work which in Canada has a money value of three or four or five dollars a day.

But my inquiries led me farther afield, and have prompted me to raise this question in the committee. I was told by not a few officers and men who are in charge of these internment operations and learned as a result of interviews with several internees, that these people would like to be allowed to make a contribution to the winning of the war if there could be found for them a