

War Appropriation—Army

to-day that our friends to the south the United States of America are talking of drafting another million men, fathers and married men up to quite an age. I also read that a great many more women in Britain were to be called up. With what I have been learning here of Canada it just does not add up. Our armed services are going to reduce recruiting.

Last evening the minister rather took me to task when I asked what recruiting cost annually in this country. I would remind you, Mr. Chairman, that we have a dual system for our armed services. Along with recruiting that costs \$1,500,000 a year we have the draft system. I think that draft system is on the down grade at the present time. In 1942-43 we enrolled 60,000 men under that system. That dropped to 25,000 in the following year, and for the first nine months of this year it is some 19,000. Of that number about 3,000 have gone active; another 6,500 have been discharged, and there are about 5,300 N.R.M.A. men who are out on extended leave. This, along with the advice that goes out that recruiting will not be so active in future, certainly instils in the minds of the Canadian people a state of complacency; that the war is about won. I agree that the minister does not think that is so. But I say that impression is created throughout Canada. You cannot get away from it.

While I am speaking about complacency may I refer to an incident that happened when I was at home last fall? I came in from the farm one day and was informed that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had just announced that an item had come from the office of the Prime Minister to the effect that they were going to ask Canadians to take an hour or two to celebrate the victory in Italy and Sicily. I must confess that I had a cold chill when I was told that. In fact I said, "I cannot believe it."

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): They cancelled it.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I said, "You know what I think about our—"

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That was a faux pas.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): "—Prime Minister as a war leader. I cannot credit that statement." I am happy to think that before very long another message came over the air which was—as a result of a statement from Washington that President Roosevelt had said that this was certainly no time for celebration—to the effect that the celebration was off. I am happy to think that occurred before we, as Canadians, had been humiliated.

I think it is the duty of every public official in this country, and especially those in the

[Mr. J. A. Ross.]

government, to avail themselves of every opportunity to impress upon our citizens that this war is far from won, as the minister has himself said. I feel rather frustrated about the whole situation, as I must confess. I cannot see the end of this war in sight in the near future. I think it is bad that our people are led to believe that it is nearly over. As I stated, we must keep before our people that we have a long, dark, hard pull ahead of us. I hate to think of the heartaches that I fear will take place in this country as a result of great casualties if we win this war as we should. I think that should be impressed upon the public.

As I say, the man-power situation, the recruitment for the various armed services and the draft system do not portray the seriousness of the situation. I am not able to get to the bottom of it. I am more befuddled, after listening to the remarks of the Minister of National Defence, than I was before I started, and I certainly was in a deep mystery then.

An hon. MEMBER: You always are.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): That may be. I do not profess to be an armchair strategist or anything of that kind. But I have had a little experience in war, and I am prepared to take up arms again if the opportunity should arise. But I say I am quite confused. I say we are not impressing the seriousness of this whole business on the people of Canada as we should.

An hon. MEMBER: John Bracken is.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I trust that we shall not need any further recruitment, either by the draft system or voluntarily. But, as I say, it does not add up, as far as I am concerned. Along with what has been said by the minister, the leader of the opposition, and others on various occasions, I want to impress upon the people that we have a very serious task ahead of us. I am afraid it will cost this country a lot in lives. We should be impressing that seriously upon the people. I repeat, what we have learned here in the last few weeks has not borne that out.

Mr. LOCKHART: I was out of the house for a few minutes. Did the minister take cognizance of the note I sent him across the floor, and will he let me have the information about the proving ranges?

Mr. RALSTON: I shall.

Mr. LOCKHART: There is quite a lot of damage being done.

Mr. JACKMAN: Will the minister tell the committee how many officers have graduated from the allied military school at Kingston, how many are being trained there at the present time, what the purpose of it is, and where these officers are to be sent afterwards?