

Elliott Little in November, 1942. I wish the minister would be good enough at his leisure or at the earliest possible moment to table the correspondence dealing with the resignations of these sixteen or nineteen officials. I believe what I said before with respect to national selective service will be fairly well borne out by the evidence these documents will afford the committee.

One other matter I wish to deal with is the question of the enforcement of the regulations of national selective service. It is one thing to have regulations on paper, and another thing to have them enforced. Regulations without enforcement are not of much use. My information is that the chief enforcement officer, whose name I have forgotten for the moment, has left the department.

Mr. MITCHELL: Walsh?

Mr. GRAYDON: I think the name is Mr. Austin Wright.

Mr. MITCHELL: He is not with us any more.

Mr. GRAYDON: No; I know he is not. I should like to know whether or not he has been replaced, and why he left a position in national selective service. Also—and I suggest that the minister's parliamentary assistant or someone else make a note of these items, because I do not ask the minister to answer them all at the moment, as I want to get on with the business of the committee—I should like to know how many prosecutions have been launched with respect to enforcement of national service regulations.

There are one or two other matters which, I think, are also important. So far as the local offices are concerned, I realize that what the minister said when he made his speech the other day, in reply to something I had said was quite true, that no one wants to direct unfair criticism against these local officials; criticisms based on the government's policy should be shouldered, not by them, but by the government. The minister clearly and quite properly pointed out to-day that these men and women who are attempting to do their jobs in the local offices of national selective service are doing so under obvious difficulties, through lack of training and experience. The minister in effect said, "What can you expect in six months?" But the point is that we should not at this time have amateurs in these posts. The time is long past since the question of national selective service was first broached by the government, and particularly by the Prime Minister. The main criticism that most people aver against national selective service as an institution is that it was much too slow in getting into operation. It was not, and is not

[Mr. Graydon.]

now capable of competently handling mass transfers from time to time, which it is so essential in the national interest that it should handle.

Someone, I am not sure whether it was the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister of Labour, made reference to-day to the question of special permits. I fancy he was referring to special permits with respect to agriculture. That opens up this particular subject: Once a special permit is given to a man who is leaving a farm for some other industry, what check has national selective service upon the return of that man to his original line of occupation? I will not say the minister is not frank about these things. He is, as far as his knowledge goes. But I should like him to tell the committee whether there is any possibility with the present national selective service machinery of any check as to whether these men ever return to their original occupations.

I understand, too, that there is a system of open permits, which are almost like blank cheques. When a man comes into a selective service office and is handed one of these blank permits, when and how are these permits checked off and records of them made? Once an open permit gets into the hands of an employee who is seeking a job, it then rests with the employer who finally hires him to send that open permit back to the selective service office where it belongs. But the check is, in my opinion, a very loose one, and one as to which I should like some explanation from the minister when he comes to make a reply to the various matters I have raised.

I should have liked to ask a number of other questions, but I do not wish to go into the subject in any further detail at the moment.

Mr. MITCHELL: I will try to be as brief as I can. I think I can now answer most of the questions my hon. friend has put to me.

With regard to the question of resignations, I am not concerned about an individual who probably should have been, if the terms of his letter have any basis in fact, a playwright rather than an executive. But hon. gentlemen will appreciate this, that when you get an organization of 7,000 people, a dozen resignations are not of any great consequence, particularly when you are in the process of building that organization. It is the easiest thing in the world to resign from a position when the job is difficult.

Mr. GOLDING: Running out when the going is tough.