

this man and that man to go on the farm, the national service regulations will not work at all. I offer that suggestion to the minister in all honesty.

The regulations were arranged to get the farmers into a trap and keep them there. I have no objection to farmers enlisting voluntarily, but those who do not enlist voluntarily are not cowards; they are boys who could not leave the farm. It was impossible to let them leave the farm. If they did, it would be the same as padlocking the barn after the horse was stolen. That is the way it went, and that is the way it is now.

The season now is very late; it is late at home in my county. The weather has been disastrous in some places and we do not know what the future will be. Last year we had a fine crop, it is true, but we cannot conclude that the same thing will happen this year. Is the crop of last year to be considered a standard crop for all time to come? It is impossible to reason in that way; it is all wrong. If God helped us last year, I hope He will help us again this year. I hope that Divine Providence will help the farmers and the population of this country generally this year as well as we were helped last year. But we must not count on probabilities. That is very dangerous. We must neglect nothing.

After the Minister of Agriculture had spoken as he did he asked: How can we, with a population of twelve millions, expect to feed China with a population of four hundred millions? That shows one thing, that the farmer must stay on the land and provide the food that is required for our own economy and for our armed forces and those of the allied nations.

The minister also said that we must thank the boys in the army that we are able to discuss matters freely in this House of Commons. When we compare the population of China or Great Britain or especially the United States with our own—and the United States has twelve times our population—we cannot expect, if we have the same number of men in the army, to go on producing as we have been. We cannot do everything in the whole world. The policy of the government, especially the policy of the Liberal party must be rationalized. It must take into consideration many elements that are vital for success. That is why I insist upon this. I speak very earnestly to the minister. I want him to do a good job. While I have argued the case of the farmers with the associate director of national selective service here in Ottawa, I wish to pay tribute to him and his representative in Quebec City. I went to a great deal of trouble precisely to prevent the

agricultural industry from being destroyed through the activities of some over-zealous men who want to take the farmers into the army.

I hope, sir, that from now on, the Minister of Agriculture will look after his department and not intrude upon the war departments by speaking of matters which do not come under him. At the present time, strange as it seems, the Minister of Labour has more important functions than the Minister of Agriculture, because the former is the one who can tell the farmers what to do. He has the seniority of right and the seniority of duties over the Minister of Agriculture, and his colleague the Minister of Agriculture should understand this and should not take advantage of his position to serve as recruiting agent for any one of the war ministers. That is my humble view, and I give it with all sincerity and hoping to get results.

I trust that all hon. members who have been advocating the case of the farmer will stop saying, "We need more men in the army, and we want the farmer in the field." It cannot work. Conscription for overseas will never work, because then again some over-zealous bureaucrats will think they are obliged to satisfy all the requests that they receive from the national defence departments and will take from the farms men who are essential there, to put them in the army where they are not so essential. I will say more than that to the minister. Does he know that men who were defaulters and others who were deserters have been sentenced to eight, twelve and even fourteen months in the "clink?" What is the use of a farmer who reports to the army and is kept in the "clink?" He does not serve the army; he does not serve the farm, and he is a burden to the country, which has to pay for his maintenance. That man would be more useful on the farm than in the "clink." Some of these fellows say they must remain on their farms, and there are pitiful cases of men who, if they have not a legal excuse, have in equity a plausible explanation to give of what they have done. Besides that, according to the old saying, you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. I ask the minister to think of that. He may turn down my suggestions; that is his right; but I tell him what I think of his present duties and I shall add that as a good Canadian I was insulted and my statements were deprecated simply because I was fighting for real national selective service a long time ago. I remember an hon. member from Toronto who told me I was a supporter of Hitler just because I