

minion of Canada as a reputable paper, and I presume its correspondent in London is a reputable man. At any rate, on my responsibility as a member of this House, I placed those words on Hansard some two or three weeks ago, and it was within the province of the Government to verify or secure a contradiction of the statements made by Mr. Amy, in the interval which has elapsed. Apparently this has not been done; therefore, I must ask that Mr. Amy's indictment stand.

There is another side to this question, which is, perhaps, even more important than that which I have already mentioned. I wish to quote what Mr. Amy has to say in regard to it:—

The failure to comb out the eligibles in the munition factories is a bit of inside history that should be made public for the enlightenment of those who would use drastic measures.

It will be observed, we are proposing to pass a law here which contemplates the exemption of employees in munition factories; you will notice, Mr. Amy is speaking about the failure to comb out eligibles in munition factories in England.

Mr. W. H. BENNETT: Where is the exemption of employees in munition factories to be found in the Act?

Mr. OLIVER: It is contained in subsection (a) when read in connection with the last clause on the first page of the preamble. It either means that, or the preamble has no purpose at all. Mr. Amy's statement is a somewhat lengthy explanation of a very serious situation, but I desire to place it before the House, because I consider it has a bearing on the situation in which we find ourselves in Canada, not in exactly the same connection, but in another which I consider closely parallel:—

The political strength of labour in England is too well known to need elaboration here. Only the harsh necessities of war, backed by a coalition government, could have enforced the policy of dilution of labour early entered upon. Labour responded willingly enough, especially as it did not carry with it at that time any policy of substitution. For with dilution came a guarantee not to conscript the members of the twenty-five unions concerned.

But unforeseen difficulties cropped up, and events approached a crisis in the fall of last year. The unions, in what they considered self-protection, had insisted that the new men should join the unions and receive the union wage. And gradually the new blood outnumbered the old; and as it was made up of youthful fellows, the majority of whom had entered the factories to escape khaki (and they admit it with shocking complacency) its principles, and methods slowly crept into the ascendancy. And, of course, its main object

was to continue to draw five pounds a week in clover instead of a shilling a day before the German guns.

Fully to appraise the menace of this condition, one should remember that these men were guaranteed exemption, that they control the unions which control the make-up of the dismissals for service. The attempt of the Government to overcome that obstacle by ruling that only the skilled should be exempt was frustrated by the unions demanding of the company managements that all employees be termed skilled—even the porters and workmen about the yards. A few were combed out here and there, but very few.

Finally the Government and the leaders of the unions devised a scheme. It was intended to put an end to the domination of the new blood—whose shirking did not commend itself to labour leadership, an essentially loyal body of men in the main—and to secure for the army the needed recruits. The Government announced the cancellation of all trade union cards and war service certificates. The plan was to re-issue them only to the skilled. It looked good. But the shirkers were wise. Working strictly in local bodies only, for the leaders would not sanction it, the stewards put it bluntly to their managers. I know of factories where the entire body of workers threatened to strike if a single man was taken by the Government. They knew that not one could be combed out without the consent of the manager; and local fealty had cemented the old and the new membership through previous wage troubles.

It is clear that the experience in England does not justify leaving the discretion and the authority as to the enforcement of the principle of compulsory military service under this Bill to the tribunals appointed and empowered as these tribunals are expected to be. It has not worked in England, and if it did not work in England it certainly will not work in this country, because there is a respect for constituted authority, for precedent and for right doing because it is right, in England, that, I am sorry to say, does not exist to the same extent in this country.

Mr. BURNHAM: I do not believe that. That is a libel on this country.

Mr. OLIVER: Perhaps it is and again perhaps it is not. At any rate, I am standing here on my responsibility as a member of this Parliament to say that the rights of the people are not properly safeguarded under the provisions of this Bill. I am asking that they be safeguarded. If they cannot be safeguarded under the provisions of this Bill, the Government has no right to put through such a Bill, and they should bring forward some other Bill based on principles that would permit the safeguarding of the rights of the people, and which would give us an assurance that there would be equal justice between man and man,