

the present Minister of National War Services has spoken and what are the subjects discussed, first, from the time he was appointed as deputy minister of national war services until he was sworn in as minister; second, from the time he was sworn in as minister until his election as hon. member for Outremont and, third, from then on? It would be interesting to see what has been the programme of this perambulating Cicero in Quebec and outside.

The Minister of Agriculture, who is a very active man, has stated that he has travelled from coast to coast. I agree that on account of his position he must travel a great deal, but I am sure he did not stop off in the county of Temiscouata because he would have seen conditions entirely different from what he described. He stated that in round figures the loss of agriculture to the army was about twenty-five per cent. I know of cases where a key man on a farm was taken; no postponement was granted and he had to stay in the army. Even now when I ask the Minister of National Defence to release these men the answer is, no, most of the time. That is not right. The Minister of Agriculture said that we have in round figures a million men on the farm, a million men in the army, and a million men in our war industries.

Let me say to the Minister of Agriculture, who said that I was a bit unfair—I was not unfair, I was most generous—that at the start the regulations were made precisely to deceive the farmer, and it was the Minister of Agriculture, whose duty it is to keep men on the farm, who was made recruiting agent for the Department of National Defence, and he continued at that job even when he ceased to be Minister of National War Services, by making speeches like the one he made in London, Ontario, during the week-end. If there is a man who should work to keep the farmer on the farm, is it not the Minister of Agriculture? Is he not the last man to be the recruiting agent for the Department of National Defence? That is so in my humble view. The regulations, as I say, were made precisely to deceive the farmer. First, we had the one month's training; then, four months, and then indefinitely, although the men called up had no opportunity to make their own domestic arrangements accordingly. What I know very well is the fact that the regulations for the draft were all wrong. The minister for air, who has described agriculture as a seasonal occupation, should know something of the struggle we have had to have it recognized as an essential occupation, and we have not even yet succeeded in that. It is both seasonal and essential. Compare the conditions of the real

farmers who work hard from dawn to dusk with those of the gentlemen farmers of the prairies who work only three months in the year and then fill up their tractors with gasoline and empty them in the fall. That was a profound mistake, a mistake from which we all suffer.

I regret the appointment of the famous chairman of the Quebec board, a man who had four of his judgments reversed at one term of the court of appeal. To have four judgments reversed in one term of King's bench must be a record—and this was the man who was to decide cases of postponement without any appeal being allowed. Moreover, I will tell the Minister of Labour in honest-to-goodness fashion that even the registrar wrote me once, saying that the board could not reconsider its own rulings. I had to write to Ottawa to have the board told that if there was no appeal from its ruling the board had the right to reconsider its own rulings. That was the fight I had to make. If the minister wants more information about that, his colleague the Minister of National War Services, if he is honest about the matter, as I presume he will be, will inform him that I am telling the truth. I can show the minister my file if he still doubts. That is a fight we had to make for the protection of the farmer and for the protection of this country, and for the supplying of the foodstuffs that are necessary in this war. Once a man knows he has done an injustice, it is his duty to repair it. Injustices were done by the board, in larger number last year than this year, I admit, but nevertheless injustices were done just the same this year, with no redress for those concerned. There are farmers who will be unable to cultivate their farms this year, because their key man has gone to camp and it is impossible to have him brought back to the farm.

I have the statement of no less a man than the premier of the province of Quebec, who said that all farmers should have a postponement. I can show the minister many cases where that has not been done. Of course a gentleman who is head of a provincial government does not have the time to see everything that goes on and to consider each case as a member of parliament has a duty to do for the benefit of his constituents. I know very well a large number of cases in which the farmers did not get the satisfaction to which they were entitled. Moreover, I will tell the minister once more and for the last time that so long as he is not the boss—I mean the big boss—exercising the powers that he has to tell the Minister of National Defence to release