

receipt of increased wage earnings—do not recognize how much better off they are not to get a bonus for the reason that the cost of living does not justify it, owing to the effect of the government's policies on prices, salaries and wages. On the other hand, they would be playing leap-frog with a continually out of reach cost of living level to which a completely adequate bonus formula could not be applied without wrecking many business institutions.

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

DIVISIONAL WAR SERVICES BOARDS—DETERMINATION OF POSTPONEMENTS

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): I should like to direct a number of questions to the Minister of National War Services based on communications which, in common with members of rural constituencies, I have been receiving daily from those who have been called up for service during the coming month, who desire to claim exemption on the ground that they are necessary in agriculture and who mistakenly believe that members of parliament may intercede on their behalf.

The questions are: 1. Is not the decision of each of the provincial national war services boards on the question whether or not a person is liable for service, final under the regulations now in effect? 2. What directions if any, additional to the provisions of regulations, have been given to the various provincial boards as to the particular circumstances that these boards should take into consideration in determining the question as to granting or refusing postponements? Finally, will the government give consideration to the appointment of a special government representative for agriculture, additional to the provision that now appears in the regulations providing for the fact that agriculture may have its own representative in each of the provinces, whose duty it would be to appear in all cases before the various provincial boards so that the imperative needs of labour and agriculture will be assured, with due regard, of course, at all times to the need of man-power in the army?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): With great reluctance I rise to a point of order. A year ago Your Honour ruled on the limitations that must be placed on questions asked on the orders of the day. At that time Your Honour gave a considered ruling on the question. I suggest that the rule is being broken every single day in this house.

Mr. LOCKHART: These are emergency times.

Mr. SPEAKER: I find that many questions of the kind suggested by the minister are being asked on the orders of the day, when they should rightly be on the order paper. I also find, however, that many of these questions have been sent to ministers and are replied to in the house. It seems to me that there is one way by which these matters could be regulated, namely, that if a member is sending a notice to a minister with regard to a question concerning his department, which question the minister considers to be out of order on the orders of the day and one that should properly be placed on the order paper, the member proposing to ask that question on the orders of the day should be notified accordingly, and the question would then appear on the order paper in the regular form. If that were done it would obviate such discussions as have been taking place recently on questions which are followed by supplementary questions, and further supplementary questions, until the proportions of a debate are reached. I suggest that the matter is one which is really in the hands of those asking the questions and of the ministers replying thereto.

Hon. J. T. THORSON (Minister of National War Services): I am prepared to answer the questions asked by the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker), who was kind enough to give me notice of his intention to ask them. The questions relate to matters that are giving a great deal of concern to members of parliament, particularly at this time, and likewise to the members of the government.

As my hon. friend knows, the question of postponement of military training is vested in divisional boards.

There are thirteen of these divisional boards across Canada, each one of them headed by a judge of a superior court or other court in the province in which the board is located. These boards deal with all applications for postponement of the call for military training, and have exclusive jurisdiction to deal with such applications. It is not within the power of the Minister of National War Services or of the Department of National War Services or of any other person to bring about a postponement. That question is exclusively within the jurisdiction of the divisional board; the decision of the divisional board in respect of the matter is final, there is no appeal from their decision. That answers the first question of my hon. friend.

With regard to his second question, the matter is dealt with by the regulations; I would refer my hon. friend and other members of the house to section 14 of the National