

He obtained a doctor's certificate to the effect that the father could not look after the farm. Upon a rehearing being permitted, it was stated that the authorities had thought that the two boys left at home could run the farm. They pointed out, however, that upon reviewing the circumstances they saw matters in a new light. They realized that the situation had changed since the boy had enlisted, and they permitted him to go back for six months.

I believe all hon. members have their hearts and souls in the soil of Canada. Few of us have not had sufficient contact with agriculture in Canada to appreciate how difficult it is for the agriculturist to carry on progressively under prevailing conditions. Each of us will realize that to become a successful farmer requires many years of hard work; one must become accustomed to the mode of living. It is a highly developed vocation. Yet in these days we see farmers staying at home who are not permitted to sell a pound of butter manufactured on their own farms. A farmer may not kill his own pig for his own use, without first obtaining permission. Were we to engage in farming we would find that it requires some planning, and I certainly think the farmer merits more consideration than he is receiving.

For these reasons I welcome the announcement made the other day that the strings with respect to national selective service, as far as agriculture is concerned, are going to be loosened. My only regret is that the extent to which they are to be loosened was not announced long before this.

In my community many a herd of milch cows has been reduced and many a farmer has had to discontinue his activities, for I think it will be found that enlistments in the army from my constituency compare favourably with those from any other constituency in Canada. What is the farmer getting for the milk he has to sell? He is receiving the very same price he was getting in the depth of the depression. To-day in the city of Ottawa milk sells for twelve cents a quart, including a bonus of two cents paid by this government to the consumer, not to the producer. That was the price four years ago.

I now come to the price ceiling, which is of greatest concern to the farmer. I think every hon. member will agree that there is a great deal of truth in the old adage that farm prices are the last to rise and the first to drop. The object of having ceilings on prices is commendable; but in order to fit into our national economy these ceiling prices must be fair in our national interest. These

ceilings were put on in the fall of the year, when in the main the produce of the farms was ready for marketing. This was done just after we had emerged from a depression, when the business man was able to raise his prices, change his brands, cut down on quality and quantity and do whatever else might be done in order to meet the fixed price. As usual, however, agriculture was behind commercial enterprise in raising its prices, and those prices did not reach the levels they should have been allowed to attain.

What has been done to meet the situation? Well, the government give a bonus on cheese. That is all very well. They give a bonus on butter, but that bonus is given to the consumer. A bonus is given on milk, but no part of those two cents a quart goes to the benefit of the producer. The only way in which the bonus on butter can help the farmer is by increasing the consumption of butter, but the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and the government would have us believe that it is the duty of the farmer to convert his milk into cheese. He cannot do both. Then there is the farmer who manufactures his own butter, which he brings to the city and tries to sell. He cannot sell it unless he collects coupons, and he can collect only so many coupons from each individual. What an encouragement to agriculture that is! Then there is the question of farm wages. I do not think there is anyone in this house interested in agriculture who will not deplore the shortage of help on the farms. Why is there such a shortage? There are two reasons: either the farmer's son has left, or the farmer cannot pay wages high enough to get a man to help with the work. Agriculture demands long hours, with heavy work, which can be done only by those who have been accustomed to it. How many people not brought up on a farm can go out and establish themselves on the land, and produce as progressive and thrifty farmers do? I ask hon. members to compare the wages being paid to-day. A man driving a truck for an industrial concern can get eighty cents an hour. Can any farmer in Canada pay eighty cents an hour for a man to operate his power machinery? Is that not the best answer we have to any talk of equality of service and of sacrifice for our farmers? Or there is the other answer, the fact that one-third of the people of Canada who are engaged in agriculture receive only one-sixth of the national income. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that until the farmer can afford to compete with industry for labour, he is not getting his proper share of the national income.