

"J" *F. J. Miller* 37
PRESIDENT, P. C. M.

DEFENDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT IN MITIGATION

It seems, Sir, that Private Keewatin has a pretty bad record against him and that any punishment handed out to him doesn't seem to teach him the fact that to go A.W.L. doesn't pay; and it doesn't seem to make him an efficient soldier in any way at all. These charges against him have been due to the trouble of his wife all the time, and he apparently just thinks that if there is trouble at home he should dash home and see what the trouble is and try to fix things up and then come back again. He joined when he was only fifteen years of age, and after ten months in the Army he was discharged as being under age. Then he joined up again, and he has one brother Overseas -- and in a Reservation (it is a small Reservation) there is about eighty percent of them have joined up, and gone Overseas, and he more or less wants to be one of them.

If he is given detention again it is not going to help make him a better soldier, and it isn't going to help make him stop going A.W.L., because the moment he once is out of detention again he will just go home again when there is any trouble there and thereby lose more training, and it will be necessary for him to take his training all over again. So, I was speaking to the accused, and he has offered the suggestion that to prove the fact that he is willing to go Overseas and to stop giving him a chance to go A.W.L., he would like to be placed under close arrest until the next draft leaves, and he says he is willing to go Overseas and would be glad to go, and he is willing to be placed under arrest right to the boat. He figures it is quite right to go A.W.L. when his wife needs him, and punishment after punishment doesn't seem to change him and doesn't seem to make him an efficient soldier. Once he is Overseas there won't be any chance for him to go home to help his wife, or anything -- he will simply be there.

I would like to add that I know for a fact that Private Keewatin went direct to his home on his two previous A.W.L. charges, for which he was sentenced. Because of his Race he has very few friends or associates in Camp, and he just gets pretty lonesome, and at the first chance goes home where he has some friends.

F. J. M.