

useful occupation was not of itself sufficient to determine the tribunal in exempting him. Other questions had to be considered; for instance, whether the applicant's place could not be filled by a man who was disqualified from the military standpoint, or even by a woman. These and many other considerations were taken into account by the tribunals. Simply because the occupation in which the man is engaged is useful, even though it may be the only one in which he is skilled, it does not follow that he should be retained. Any provision other than the general one that those who can best serve the national interests at home shall stay at home, is, I fear, a dangerous provision.

Mr. PROULX: I think that some limit should be imposed as to the number of men required on a farm. My hon. friend cited the case of a father and two sons on a farm of 100 acres, and the father being left to do all the work as the sons had enlisted. We might state in the Bill that not more than three persons should be allowed to 100 acres. Three men, I think, would be sufficient for that acreage. In England so many agriculturalists were allowed to enlist in the early days of the war, and farm labour became so scarce that 27,000 men had to be recalled from the trenches to cultivate the farms. There is danger of something similar happening here unless we provide against it. We should take steps to ensure that our production will be sufficient to support our own population and to help supply the Allies with food-stuffs. There are not many farms in Canada where you will find more than two sons and the father working the farm. I think the Bill should allow a certain number of men to each farm.

Mr. RAINVILLE: My attention has been drawn to this very question. The purpose of the Government in introducing this Bill is that the nation's efforts should be directed toward winning the war. Some men will be called on to fight, and others will be engaged in sustaining the productivity of the Dominion. The preamble states that in view of the large number of men who have already left agricultural and industrial pursuits in Canada to enlist, and in view of the necessity of sustaining the productivity of the Dominion, it has been found necessary to introduce this legislation. If the Government are sincere in stating that their intention is to retain men who are useful in agricultural and industrial pursuits, I do not see why this section should

not be made to read accordingly. The preamble, it is true, sets out the Government's intention, but I do not see why it should not be expressly stated in this section—that agriculture and other necessary industries of the country shall be maintained. I therefore beg to move:

That in line 32 of subsection (a) of section 11 the words "agricultural, industrial or" be inserted after the word "in" and before the word "other."

The subsection would then read:

That it is expedient in the national interest that the man should, instead of being employed in military service, be engaged in agricultural, industrial or other work in which he is habitually engaged.

That would be expressly stating the Government's intention as set out in the preamble. I would impress upon the House that the intention of this Bill is not to conscript the whole man-power of the country, but only 100,000 men, and if there are any industries that should be protected, they are agriculture and the other industries necessary to the winning of the war. I think every one will admit that agriculture is one of the first industries that should be taken care of. The inserting of these words would not mean that a man so engaged would necessarily be exempted, but it would ensure that the production of the country would not suffer by reason of this Bill. The amendment is absolutely in accord with the Government's intention.

Mr. J. GIRARD (Chicoutimi-Saguenay) (translation): Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to second the amendment offered by my hon. friend from Chambly-Verchères (Mr. Rainville), to the exemption clause.

I think that, if the amendment offered by my hon. friend is not going to be applied to the exemption provisions, to which he wishes to apply it, it would be desirable to make the interpretation of the section clearer and to add to subsection A after the words "in which he is habitually engaged" the following words: "The men engaged in agricultural and industrial pursuits and in the fisheries." I do not intend to embarrass the Government with this amendment, but in the preamble, the Government seems to be aiming at protecting the agricultural and industrial classes. The intention of the Government in that respect is open to doubt. I have received several letters and I think this subsection should be made plainer, so as to make perfectly clear what the real purpose of the Government is.