



FARM AND DAIRY & RURAL HOME



We Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas.

The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham

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What is Wanted---Food or Fighters? Cooperation Needed Between Food Controller's Department and Exemption Tribunals

FARMERS throughout Canada are being appealed to by the Food Controller to put forth every effort toward the utmost production of food stuffs on every farm. This appeal is made necessary by the world-wide food shortage. Should Canadian farmers fall down on production, state officials from the Food Controller's Department, famine conditions among the Allies in Europe will result, and compulsory rationing at home will be made necessary.

It is pretty generally admitted by those who are in a position to know conditions that mistakes have been made, even under the voluntary enlistment plan, in taking men away from Canadian farms who are needed there. Many men who are now overseas could have better served their Empire by keeping their farms running to the limit of their productive capacity. It was, in part, to prevent further mistakes of a similar character being made that a selective system of compulsory service was instituted. By this system it was hoped that the men needed in Canada would be left and that the hundred thousand men needed for overseas service would be taken from such branches of industry as could best spare them.

Farmers Not Being Exempted.

In spite of the great need for agricultural production, many military tribunals are refusing to grant exemption to bona fide farmers. Should these farmers not be exempted on appeal, the production of food stuffs in Canada will surely suffer. This situation arises from a lack of appreciation on the part of some tribunal members of the need of food production, and it is a serious one. It is to correct the errors made by such tribunals that the privilege of appeal has been provided. And in considering the cases which may come up for appeal, as well as those coming before the original tribunals, the closest cooperation between the Food Controller's Department and the Military Service Board will be necessary if Canada is to do her best.

In order that the attitude of the Dominion Government and of the Food Controller might be ascertained, the Editor-in-Chief of Farm and Dairy visited Ottawa last week with the object of interviewing Premier Borden and Hon. Mr. Hanna, Food Controller. Unfortunately, Premier Borden, Hon. Mr. Hanna, and Hon. Mr. Crerar, Minister of Agriculture, were out of the city, as was also Hon. Mr. Doherty, Minister of Justice, who has charge of the administration of the Military Service Act. In their absence, one of the chief executive officers of the Food Controller's staff, and Mr. E. L. Newcombe, Deputy Minister of Justice, who is the chairman of the Military Service Council, were interviewed. It was evident that the protests of farmers over the actions of certain of the military tribunals had been making their effect felt at Ottawa.

The representative of Hon. Mr. Hanna did not desire to be quoted by name, but gave the assurance that the Food Controller's Department is alive to the situation. "It is impossible for us," he said, "to do much at this time, as the Act is being administered by another department, over which we have no control, and with which we have no connection. We expect, however, that farmers who feel that their exemptions should be allowed, and who have been refused exemption, will make appeals, and that these appeals will be given every consideration by the Appeal Tribunals. Our department is impressing on the Government the seriousness of the food situation and the necessity of food production being maintained to the limit."

Should Appeal Cases.

Mr. Newcombe, as chairman of the Military Service Council, is probably in closer touch with the administration of the Military Service Act than any other Government official. "I am not surprised," he said, "that there have been numerous complaints over the decisions of certain of the

tribunals. When the Act was drafted, we realized that the decisions of many of the tribunals could not be uniform in every case, inasmuch as we have 1,350 tribunals. Some of these men were certain to lay more importance on certain points of evidence than others, and thus there would be diversity in the decisions of the tribunals. It was for this purpose that we arranged for Appeal Tribunals and for a third appeal where such action seems necessary. We expect farmers, who feel that they should have been granted exemption, to press their claims before the appeal tribunals, where the judges will be men of experience who should be capable of giving them justice. The chances are that if they appeal twice, and their appeals are disallowed in both cases, that there is good reason that their exemptions should not be granted.

Mr. Newcombe was asked what the attitude of the tribunals would likely be in cases where a couple of men might be employed on a farm of 100 to 150 acres, and where the first tribunals insisted on one of these men being sent to the front. He was asked if arrangements could not be made for these young men, where they so desired, to be allowed to work on other farms in the district which were greatly undermanned. He replied that he believed these men would be justified, when making their application for appeal, in pointing out to the appeal tribunals that it is more important that they should be allowed to work on these undermanned farms than it is that they should go to the front. As the proceedings before the tribunals are very informal in character, he felt certain that they would be given every opportunity to lay facts of this nature before the appeal tribunals.

If Over 100,000 Are Raised?

It was pointed out to Mr. Newcombe that the Government desired to raise only 100,000 men, and that it had been estimated that a considerably larger number than 100,000 would be raised by this first draft. In the event of this being proved to be the case, he was asked if farmers' sons might not be left until the last and not included in the first draft. His reply was that this point had not been considered, and was not likely to be considered until it has been found just how many have been raised by the draft. If over 100,000 are raised, then the Government will decide upon some method of dealing with the situation, and this point would then be taken into consideration. In the meantime, however, he did not think there was much possibility of over 100,000 men being raised.

Mr. Newcombe emphasized the point that he thought that the men on the appeal tribunals, who would for the most part be judges, and therefore

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Farmers May Appeal

A Statement by Sir Robert Borden

THE purpose of the Military Service Act is to provide the needed reinforcements by means of a selective draft; and it was the intention of Parliament that those who could serve their country more usefully and effectively by continuing in essential work in which they were engaged should continue therein and should be exempt from military service.

From reports received by the Prime Minister it appears that in some instances tribunals have refused exemption where the circumstances distinctly required that it should be granted; as, for example, cases where exemption has been refused to men long engaged in agricultural production without whose labor such production could not be continued.

REMEDY OF APPEAL.

(a) In these cases the remedy is by appeal, the procedure for which is of the simplest character. A letter to the registrar of the province is sufficient, and the appellant need not engage the services of a lawyer. The registrar may be addressed as follows:

In Ontario, the registrar under the Military Service Act, Toronto.

In Quebec, the registrar under the Military Service Act, Montreal, Que. (as the case may be), and so on for the various provinces.

The person applying for exemption need not attend before the court of appeal. A statement of his case in writing will be sufficient. Attendance, however, is most desirable, wherever possible or convenient.

(b) It appears that in many cases persons having legitimate claims to exemption have been appealed when exemption is denied. The appeal should be made within three days, but the time for appeal can be extended on application to the appeal tribunal or upon application to the Minister of Justice. There should, however, be no unnecessary delay in taking out the appeal in any case where it has not already been done.