

pire, in the way of producing food, stimulating industry, and developing our mines and fisheries. Although we have kept the National Service Commission out of this Bill, I was thinking that every exemption dealt with in this clause of exemptions by the judge should be sent, with full information, on a card, to some authority, where it could be dealt with, because every one knows the National Service cards were filled up in a very unsatisfactory manner. The National Service Commission cannot accomplish anything with the cards, signed as they have been. Why not take this opportunity, with this big organization which will be established all over Canada—and maybe outside of Canada, for some people went away without reason—and get these cards, and all information obtained by the National Service Commission, and we may have the conscription of wealth, or agriculture or industry, whatever we may call it, and have machinery that will direct our people where they can go in order to render the best service to the country and to humanity. That is the first consideration and if we do not want to face a great shortage of food something of this kind must be done. And this shortage will not take place in Canada only. Everybody knows, considering what is taking place everywhere, that we may have to face a shortage of food all over the world. We may face shortage of every production in other countries, and we may have the manufacturers producing products that are not useful. If we insert a provision on the very first page of this Bill that agriculture and industry shall be the first consideration to be dealt with by the Government then we can use the full strength of the nation. The first consideration should be, not the farmer himself, but that which is produced by the farmer. I am not claiming exemption for the farmer; I am claiming what may be called the conscription of agriculture for the benefit of the people of this Dominion. When I put it that way, I do not think that hon. gentlemen can attribute to my words any other sense than that in which I utter them. One gentleman has said that such a course would be an insult to the farmers. I do not see why. If it is admitted that we should conscript for the army; that we should conscript wealth, agriculture, industry; then I say that agriculture is the first to be taken care of. If a farmer should not be producing enough, it would be the duty of a judge to say: You are not producing what you should; you go

to the war, and we will put another man in your place. The result would be the production of what is necessary to feed the people. I do not consider that this would be an insult to the farmer, and I challenge those who contend that such is the intention of my amendment. My desire is that there shall be put on the farms all the hands available to work the lands properly and ensure a maximum amount of production throughout the country.

Mr. MARCIL: In the centre of Canada farming is a basic industry, and all over Canada agriculture is important, but there are parts of the country where mining or fishing are of the first importance. As I understand the explanation of the Solicitor General, no man can claim exemption because of his calling, but any man who cannot be replaced may be exempted because of the importance of the services which he renders here. This principle, I understand, is based upon the principle adopted in England. A man in any calling, therefore, may be exempted, and a man in any calling may be forced to go to the front.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It would be hardly correct to use these words with regard to exceptions, but using them with regard to exemptions, my hon. friend's understanding is quite correct.

Mr. OLIVER: The subclause that we are now discussing is an exemption provision; it is a provision to enable everybody to be exempted. There is no necessity for the following subclauses in the section, because this subclause covers everything and everybody. In section 2 provision is made for the compulsory service of everybody, and in section 11 provision is made for the exemption of everybody. This is supposed to be a deliberative body, responsible to the people for the result of legislation passed with the authority of the House. We are told that the purpose of this Bill is selective conscription, but after over an hour's discussion we have not a scintilla of information as to what the selection is going to be, or on what basis it is going to be made. Parliament is asked to endorse a Bill of that character, affecting the lives and the honour of 100,000 of its citizens. Is the Solicitor General serious when he tells us that there is to be no regulation by authority of Parliament of the conduct of tribunals under this section?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I was quite serious when I told the committee what I did tell it, but I did not say what my hon. friend