

that the government might go on with the war. My judgment is that we should have granted the money to the government, so that it could go on with the war, without so much talk about it. There will be plenty of opportunity for every hon. member to say all he wishes to say when the departmental estimates are before the committee. That is my own opinion in the matter.

Therefore I have said very little up to the present time, all through these weary weeks of talking and talking with respect to the war appropriation bill. The government has to have the money. It is essential to the prosecution of the war, so why not give it to them, and go on with other matters?

Perhaps, however, I should on this occasion make one or two observations. I believe the minister is struggling with a very difficult task, and so far as I can judge, and with my limited knowledge of the details of his difficulties, he is doing as well as a man could be expected to do under the circumstances.

Although he has endeavoured to clarify the whole situation with respect to selective service, I find that throughout the rank and file of the people everywhere there exists boundless confusion concerning regulations with respect to selective service. The average farmer is just bewildered by reason of the statements which are made. I believe the time has come—and very likely the minister fully agrees with me—for a frank, honest, open, clear and detailed statement of the whole selective service situation. When the Prime Minister on March 23, 1942, I believe it was, issued a statement to the effect that farmers were not to be taken off the land, people on the farms took it for granted he meant what he said. It never dawned on them that back behind the curtains there had been issued an order to the effect that probably a given number of thousands had to be taken out of a given province, whether they came off the farms, or whether they did not. I say any action of that kind was not playing fair with the people. It is just a cheap, base kind of trickery or treachery or double dealing. The ordinary man on the street, where I have been, feels just that way about those regulations as a whole. The minister is not to blame for them, but clarification would certainly be the remedy.

I received a letter from a farmer in my constituency, a very well-educated farmer, and one who showed good reasoning powers. He said, "When the statement was made that the boys were not going to be taken off the farms I assumed my boy was not going to be taken off my farm, and I invested in so

many cattle, so many hogs and some other types of stock. I opened up on a rather extensive scale on my farming activities for 1943. And now, behold, right out of the blue, my boy is taken away; and all the efforts I can put forth will not prevent it. So, if the government is intending to take boys like that, surely a man has a right to be told about it." It is the mere fact that this man was not told which makes the situation so unfair as to constitute a betrayal.

We are giving consideration to industry along these lines. When men put money into industry the government has taken commendable care to try to help them avoid losing their money. Those men are given safeguards and guarantees, and that is the only way to build up the confidence of men who have money to invest. The same applies to farmers. If a farmer is to spend money on the purchase of good cows and good stock of various kinds, he must invest what for him is a large sum of money, and surely he is entitled to protection. This is just one way in which protection has not been given to him. I say it constitutes rather cheap double dealing, and I suggest at the earliest possible date the minister should clarify the whole situation, so that everybody will understand. That is one example.

We have heard a good deal in regard to a man being essential to agriculture. What is the meaning of that phrase, "essential to agriculture"? I do not believe any man can define what it means to be essential to agriculture. The board is left to form its own interpretation of the meaning of those words. A man who is running a farm may think his boy is essential to agriculture. The boy may think so; they may establish it to their own complete satisfaction and the satisfaction of the people around them; yet the board may not feel that this boy is essential to agriculture. That is just one example, one illustration of why clarification is necessary.

Let me give another illustration, and I have had cases of this kind brought to my attention. Supposing a man depends upon his son, nineteen or twenty years old, to run the tractor on the farm. That man simply cannot operate the tractor himself and cannot employ anyone else to operate it. A tractor is an expensive piece of machinery; it cannot be trusted to anyone who is irresponsible. Suppose that boy, after all the tractor work is done and the other hard work is finished in the fall, accepts a job teaching school, as a result of the persuasion of the school inspector, because of the very great shortage of school teachers that exists in many districts. He teaches for a few months