

A few months ago, I am sorry to have to say it, an old man of 75 years of age was arrested by a military officer and sentenced to imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of \$350, for what? For having given a bite to eat to his son who was an alleged defaulter. This old man was a perfect gentleman; he had conducted himself well all his life, never having had to go before any magistrate. The officer took this poor, unfortunate old man, who could not readily understand the English language, before the magistrate H. W. Ferguson, and between the magistrate and the officer, a fine of \$350 and imprisonment for six months was imposed on him. Is this the way in which the laws of the country should be administered? Is this justice? I do not believe it is.

I will ask the Government this question: Have the Government any after-war mandate? They were returned to power to carry on the war, and their election was ensured through this fine War-time Elections Act which was put through the House for no better purpose than to disfranchise some honest electors and at the same time to add to the list those whose votes would keep the Government in power. The way in which the soldiers' vote was distributed throughout Canada was really a disgrace to the country. This is what a returned soldier, and a good Conservative at that time, told me. I interviewed this returned soldier about February 10, last, in reference to the way in which the voting was conducted at the front at the last election. I asked him if he had any objection to tell me how the political canvass was carried on. His answer was that he had no objection to tell me, and he said, first, "We were not allowed to talk politics amongst the soldiers," second, "The instructions were given by an officer how to vote and for whom we had to vote," third, "When the names were called, an officer followed the voters to the polling booth, and the oath was administered to the voter and the ballot handed to him to vote," fourth, "In my case, the officer followed me to the polling booth, and I took the oath as required by the War-time Elections Act, and the ballot was handed to me and the said officer was looking over my shoulder. I quickly marked my ballot for the candidate I wanted to vote for; then the said officer told me to show him my ballot which was not marked for the candidate that I was instructed to vote for; then and there, I tore the ballot into small pieces and I asked for another

one, which was handed to me. Then I marked my ballot for the candidate that I was instructed by the officer to vote for, and left the polling booth." Then I asked him what would happen if they had seen for whom he had marked the first ballot. He replied, that he would have been punished; that he would have been removed from the position that he held and put in some other place to work at some other unpleasant jobs." Then I said to him: "You did not vote for your man?" "No," he said, "my man was Mr. Robidoux." Mr. Robidoux is the man who ran for the Union Government at the last election. Then I asked him for what county and for what candidate he had voted. He said that he could not remember. That is the way in which the voting was conducted overseas. An officer, who was in France at the time of the election and who was deputy returning officer for his company, said to me: "Just a few days before polling day, a higher officer than I came to the office where I was and said to me: 'In a few days there will be a polling day; you have so many men; we want fifty votes for a certain county, twenty-five for another and so many for another, and then you have to do this.'" What could this man do in a case of this kind? He had to take his medicine just as the other had done. All this goes to show the kind of mandate that the Government has from the people.

Much has been said already in this debate about the high cost of living. I really believe that the Government know very little of the misery which exists to-day among the poor of this country. Otherwise they would have done something to relieve the conditions long ere this. What is the situation? It is really hard to understand how farmers and fishermen and labourers in the small settlements throughout this country can get along on their limited incomes in view of the present high cost of food stuffs, boots and shoes and clothing. My hon. friend from Prescott (Mr. Proulx) has read an extract from the press to the effect that a large quantity of food has been destroyed that was not fit for human consumption. Who was responsible for this waste? The poor would have been glad to purchase these food stuffs, but they were held by profiteers and trusts and combines until they were no longer fit for human consumption. These profiteers held them just to get a high price, but the Lord sent hot weather and it destroyed the food. I say the Government is responsible, because of its negligence in not having a proper in-