

hope that would not be necessary and that the Solicitor General would see the great desirability of having an amendment to that effect.

Then it has occurred to me to make another suggestion to my hon. friend and it is this: The idea of this proposed law is to in some way make everybody who is eligible for military service perform some service of a national character in case he is excused from going to the front. The Bill recognizes that there is a liability to serve, a liability on the part of a man to risk his life at the front, but it provides that he may be excused from the performance of that national duty if he will give his service to some other work which may be deemed to be equally in the national interest. It has occurred to me that if a man applies for exemption from service at the front he should be willing to serve the nation for the same compensation that a man gets who goes to the front. I have drafted an amendment, which is not quite in the form I should like to have it, but I venture to read it as a suggestion to the Solicitor General.

In making application for exemption on either of the grounds mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b), the application shall state the willingness of the man by, or on behalf of, whom the application is made, to continue in such work at a wage or salary fixed by the Governor in Council, or by persons designated by the Governor in Council, in the fixing of which regard shall be had to the rate of pay and separation allowance, if any, which would be allowed in respect to such man if he were placed on active service.

We have this anomaly to-day, that in munitions factories, as I have been told, girls with no experience are getting \$25 to \$30 a week, and young men without experience, who can simply handle a saw or an axe get \$5 to \$6 per day. A young man who goes to the front and risks his life gets \$1.10 a day in addition to his separation allowance, if any, and also his board. I should think that if a man says: It is true that I am liable under this law; I am within the military age; I am bound to serve my country—I admit all that, but I want to give my service to the nation in another direction, he ought to state in his application that he is willing to accept the same compensation that he would have received if he had gone to the front.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: To whom would the difference go?

Mr. PUGSLEY: To the nation.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: In what way?

[Mr. Pugsley.]

Mr. PUGSLEY: It should go to the nation. The munitions plants are all carried on for the nation, the Government would exercise a supervision over the wages, over the cost of manufacture, and the Empire and Canada would get the benefit of the saving.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: You would have to reduce the contract price of the shell or the manufacturer would get the benefit.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Clearly so. The Government could control that. In that way you would be working out a plan of national service. It does seem to me that this is a matter which the Government ought to take hold of. One step in reducing the cost of manufacture would be to reduce wages, and if you should find in any munitions factory a thousand men who under this Act would be liable to go to the front, but who say that they prefer to serve in the munitions factory, then, as a condition of their being exempted from going to the front, they ought to be willing to serve for the soldier's rate of pay. If they serve for a lower rate of pay it will bring down wages all around, and the country will get the benefit. The cost of munitions is simply enormous; it is out of all reason, I am told. Wages are two or three times what they ought to be. It makes no difference to the munition manufacturer what wages he pays; he adds the increased wages to the cost of the product, and the Canadian people and the people of the Empire are paying the bill. I heard the other day of the case of a young lady in Toronto—and I believe it is the fashion in Toronto for young women to work in munition factories; the idea has gone abroad that they are doing patriotic work—I am told that this young lady was placed upon the waiting list and was allowed so much a day while waiting to be employed. When the time came for her employment she received about two or three times the wages received by a soldier who has gone to the front. That is only an illustration of the large wages which are paid in these factories; unskilled workmen are getting three or four times as much as the boy gets who goes to the front and risks his life in the service of his country.

I would suggest these two amendments, one as to the hearings of all these tribunals being open to the public, and that hearings shall take place only after due public notice has been given; and the other that there should be a condition attached to the exempting of a man from military service, that condition being that he might be