

to the farm, not in good faith but as a matter of subterfuge. I saw something in the newspapers to-day or yesterday in regard to what Secretary McAdoo of the United States has said as to what they expect from Canada. He said the grain supply of the United States was depleted, and the Allies and the American nation were almost dependent upon Canada for their supply of grain. Such being the case, I do not think the question of the exemption of a man who is engaged in agriculture should be left to the whim of any tribunal, which may consist of men obsessed with the military idea, and not the idea of food production. I think a man who is engaged in the production of the firing line. The man on the farm is producing foodstuffs not only for the soldier at the front but also for the artisan and mechanic in the town who is handicapped at the present time by the lack of labour and exorbitant prices and labour should not be taken from the land. Otherwise, the prices of food, which have increased to such an extent that the ordinary man is hardly able to live, will be further increased. We should have an assurance from the Solicitor General, or the Prime Minister, that rules and regulations will be framed under this Act which will say that they shall not be taken—

Mr. PUGSLEY: How could they change the Act?

Mr. ROSS: They can make rules and regulations if the Act says so. Section 12 says:

The Governor in Council may make regulations to secure the full, effective and expeditious operation and enforcement of this Act.

Mr. PUGSLEY: But they could not change the spirit of the Act.

Mr. ROSS: That would not be changing the spirit of it, because agriculture is an absolutely necessary industry. You contend that yourself.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Why do they not put it in the statute if they want it?

Mr. ROSS: On the other hand, I cannot see how the arrangement which has been suggested by the Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rainville) is possible because, strange as it may seem, I do agree with my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Pugsley) in this case. If you put in the words that have been suggested by the amendment, you will limit the construction of the clause very considerably, because you will have to interpret the clause, as we say in law, on the

principle of ejusdem generis. You could not exclude a telegrapher or a man engaged in the transport service because the word "other" being in there would necessitate an interpretation of the Act preventing men in other not similar occupation being exempted when it might be greatly in the public interest to exempt them.

Mr. PROULX: I proposed this afternoon to have a special subclause of section 11 in regard to the agricultural classes. What my hon. friend from West Middlesex (Mr. Ross) has said confirms me in my contention. The view which the hon. member for St. John expressed a moment ago was that if you added it to subclause (a) it would perhaps embarrass the interpretation of the clause in regard to other occupations. For that reason there should be a new clause. I was referring especially to agriculture.

Mr. LEVI THOMSON: I would like to say a word with reference to subclause (f) of section 11:

That he conscientiously objects to the undertaking of combatant service and is prohibited from so doing by the tenets and articles of faith, in effect at the date of the passing of this Act—

It strikes me that some change in the wording there might be beneficial. It is provided by subclause 2 of section 3 that a man who was not married until after June 11 shall be counted as unmarried. I think it would be better, instead of wording this as being in effect at the date of the passing of this Act, that it should be so worded as to be in effect at the date of the introduction of this Bill, or June 11. That would get rid of the possibility of the trouble that the hon. gentleman from Perth (Mr. Morphy) has spoken of, that some little sect might spring up, introduce some change in their doctrine and promulgate a regulation against combatant service. It would be more in keeping with the intention of the Act if, instead of the date being fixed at the time of the passing of the Act, it should be at the time of the introduction of the Act.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That suggestion, along with a similar one made by the hon. member for Perth, which was that it should be at the date of the outbreak of the war, is worthy of consideration. I would suggest that we pass on and hold these three or four suggestions over for consideration. The clause will be reopened and I will refer to the matter at a later sitting.

Mr. NESBITT: What clause is that?