

We went into the meeting and were handed the agenda. The agenda provided for a speech from one gentleman from selective service. It provided also for a speech from a gentleman from the Department of Labour, and then it provided for the showing of a motion picture. At the bottom of the agenda it said: "No discussion will be permitted, but if you have anything to discuss there are a large number of men here from the Department at Ottawa and you can sit down privately and discuss those matters with them." Five hundred men had given up their time and money—

Mr. MITCHELL: I would like to know the name of the man who said that.

Mr. HOMUTH: Go and look at the agenda. It says right on the agenda: "No discussion will be permitted."

Mr. MITCHELL: Whose agenda was it?

Mr. HOMUTH: The agenda was drawn up by the wartime prices and trade board, who called the meeting.

Mr. MITCHELL: My hon. friend said selective service.

Mr. HOMUTH: Pardon me; I did not.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Yes, you did.

Mr. HOMUTH: I said that a man was there from the selective service to make a speech. My little friend from Vancouver Centre will please keep quiet—I mean little mentally.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): It would be better if you did too.

Mr. HOMUTH: I said that a speaker from selective service spoke at the meeting.

Mr. MITCHELL: You got mixed up in your thoughts.

Mr. ROWE: You got mixed up in your agenda. Who wrote the agenda?

Mr. HOMUTH: A Mr. Mackenzie and, I think, a Mr. Hooker.

Mr. MITCHELL: My hon. friend is trying to be too clever.

Mr. HOMUTH: I do not have to take any lessons from the Minister of Labour as to truthfulness; let me tell him that. I have known him too long.

Mr. GARDINER: You might be mistaken.

Mr. HOMUTH: This meeting was called, as I say—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): By whom?

Mr. HOMUTH: These men came there in the hope that they could discuss these problems, that as a result of the knowledge thus gained they could send recommendations back to the government, and that the government would then benefit by the advice of perhaps the most representative group of men who could be gathered together at any time in any part of this country. Instead of that, no discussion was permitted, until in the afternoon groups gathered again. There was no general discussion; little groups gathered here and there, but these men could do nothing, they could not take recommendations back to this government. Why? The speeches they made were fine and were well delivered, but they dealt with things which we in industry have known for years and which most industries have put into practice. The advice they gave would have been excellent four or five years ago, but now is not the time to tell the industrialists of western Ontario how to do these things. These men simply came to tell us, without discussion, what to do. They had no cure for such industrial ills as absenteeism. Everything that was done had to be predicated on government policy. When these various laws which deal with industrial workers were being drawn up, how often were the heads of labour and of industry invited to take part in the discussions? I venture to say that if the government had selected any six men from the employers' group and any six representatives of labour that day they could have sat down and worked out income tax provisions covering industrial workers which would have brought the government more money, would have given us greater production because it would have led to more work, and would have borne less heavily on the people who pay the taxes. Instead of that course being taken, recourse is had to so-called experts, college graduates, economists and so on, men who have no idea whatever of the headaches which industry experiences in trying to maintain production. Now—

Mr. GARDINER: The hon. member should read his speech.

Mr. HOMUTH: One thing I will say about the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) is that he, like myself, has never read a speech in this chamber. Perhaps it would be better if we did.

Another of the headaches of industrial workers is in the making out of income tax forms. I do not know of any official requirement which has caused them more concern.