

specially to this power of exemption by which a man may be relegated by the certificate to another class next in order. That is to say, though a man may be of the age which would bring him under the regulation in the first case, if in the judgment of the tribunal, though he is not absolutely entitled to exemption, it is in the national interest that he should wait until the next call, he may be relegated to the next class, and when the next class is called he may be relegated to the one following. That is the method of exemption under the British Act, and which I think will take the place of some other provisions of the British Act and will be very useful indeed.

Now as to this wholesale exempting; of course it is possible, and it may be found to be the case, if weak tribunals are formed in some localities by accident. That is why we have the right of appeal. That is why we have a central appeal judge, and it is hoped that all this will be corrected by the two appeals, and that uniformity will be secured, because in the end, the military authorities having power to go to the central appeal judge, the one system will apply over the whole of Canada, and the one interpretation will govern throughout.

Undoubtedly, should this Parliament see fit to extend the Act, as suggested by the hon. member for Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt), any exemptions that had previously been made would be utterly valueless, and any calls made thereafter would be calls made anew, and new applications for exemption would have to be made.

Mr. L. A. LAPOINTE: Might I ask the Solicitor General how he will explain the position of a judge who is too lenient and grants exemption to everybody. Such a judge will be surrounded in a district where he is well known and has lots of friends, and may exempt everybody under section 11. Who should appeal? Not those who are exempted, because they have their certificate of exemption from the judge. Do you mean somebody will appeal? If so, who is it?

Some hon. MEMBERS: The Minister of Militia.

Mr. GLASS: I have seen cases which, if exemptions are to be specified, would present even stronger claims than the case of the only son and sole support of a widowed mother. I have in mind the case of a mother who had two sons and a daughter. The elder son was her only support, the two others being very young children. This young man was not the only son of a wid-

[Mr. Meighen.]

owed mother, but he was a son who was the sole support of his mother. I can conceive how a broad application of the principle in the clause treated by the tribunals themselves would cover all cases in a much fairer way than specifying individual instances. I agree with the Solicitor General that the broad application of the principle will give more satisfactory results than trying to define a lot of fixed cases.

Mr. ROSS: I just want to make a remark or two in regard to the principles contained in the Militia Act, one of which has been spoken of here to-night, that is the exemption of an only son and support of a widow. It seems to me there is another exemption contained in subsection 2 of section 26, which I suggest might with propriety be embodied in this Act. It reads as follows:

2. If there are inscribed on the militia roll more than one son belonging to the same family, residing in the same house, only one of such sons shall be drawn, unless the number of names so inscribed is insufficient to complete the required proportion of service men.

If you get your quota of 100,000, and if, as is more than likely, you have more answering your call—because you cannot gauge the 100,000 down to a man, or 100 men, it seems to me this provision in the Militia Act is only just and fair, and should be made to apply to the case of a family in which there are two sons. Under the new law there is no provision made for such an exemption.

I wish to say also, I still sincerely believe that the production of food is so important in this country at this time that some special provision should be made in regard to agriculturists. There is no question but the whole German offensive and submarine campaign to-day is against food production. There is no offensive upon land. They see food production is our weak point, and every man we take off the farm in Canada is only assisting the Germans and the German game. I do not think it should be left to tribunals to say that any farmer shall go on the combatant line. There should be something in this Act saying that any man who is engaged bona fide in the producing of food on the farms of the country, on say, the first of May or the first of June—set a date on it if you like—shall not be obliged to go on the combatant line. I mention the first of May or the first of June in order to prevent men who may have anticipated it from skulking their duty by going back