

*War Appropriation—Labour*

who was engaged in lumbering. He states that between October 1, 1942, and April 12, 1943, he and his brother cut and shipped 300 cords of peeled pulp from their lands, and that they have twenty cords of pulp still on hand. He says that in 1942 they had cut and sawed 100,000 board feet of lumber, that they own their own sawmill, tractor and logging outfit, and that they are prepared to log and saw 200,000 board feet of lumber and to cut and ship 200 cords of pulp in the coming season.

The man in question presented his case to the selective service, pointing out that he was occupied in an essential industry. The board at Regina advised him that his application for postponement could not be granted. This is a copy of the letter received from the supervisor of farm labour requirements, Veteran block, Regina:

I have been advised by the mobilization board that your application for postponement from military service has been granted on condition that you accept employment on another farm, where your services are essential to agriculture.

In view of the fact there is no labour shortage in your immediate district, to comply with the order of the board it will be necessary for you to report to the employment office at Yorkton, where you will be supplied with a list of farm vacancies in that area.

I would be glad to have advice from you as soon as possible as to the name of the farmer with whom you have accepted employment, so that I may pass the information on the mobilization board.

This is a man engaged in lumbering. I would point out to the minister in charge of selective service that in Saskatchewan there is a shortage of lumber for the making of bins. Already in western Canada nearly a billion bushels of grain is being stored. The wheat board will not be able to take more than about 280,000,000 bushels of wheat, and there is a great shortage of lumber. This man will be compelled to leave his lumbering business, travel about 130 miles and take a job on a farm. It seems to me the officials in charge ought to realize that lumbering is an essential industry, that there is a great shortage of it in Saskatchewan, and that if we are to take care of any kind of a crop in the west this year, that lumber will be needed. The moving of a man in this fashion is, to say the least, short-sighted.

Since men are being moved to act as labourers on farms, has any definition been given or any standard set from which one may estimate a man's necessity on a farm? How does the department describe a key man in the farming industry? Is there any acreage basis, or any basis of production requirements upon which the department estimates whether or not a man is a key man? That would vary

[Mr. Castleden.]

with the different districts and with the different types of production throughout the dominion. In my own province it requires at least one able-bodied man to carry on the production from one hundred acres, particularly if there is anything in the way of milking cows or raising hogs. Have any standards of production been set in order to measure whether a man is essential in agriculture?

Mr. MITCHELL: I think my hon. friend will agree that it would be difficult to establish a yardstick. One farm may be different from the one next door. The real yardstick that we are using is common sense and reason. There are agricultural experts who are advising the different boards, and we also have reports from the various municipal committees scattered around the province of my hon. friend. I wish my hon. friend would give me the particulars of the case he mentions, because it would seem to be establishing a precedent.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: They have established a point production system in the United States, and if a man comes up to a certain standard the recommendation is made accordingly. Much of the inequalities which have arisen in selective service with regard to agriculture is caused by the fact that on one farm there will be three or four men left with an able-bodied father, while on another farm the last son is taken when the father may not be in the best of health to carry on the work.

Mr. MITCHELL: My United States friends come in to see me. Sometimes I think I have a lot of grief on my doorstep, but from what they tell me they seem to have a great deal more.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: Standards help.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Is there not some basis established as a direction for all the mobilization boards? I am told that in one province not far from here a man and a son will be left on a twenty-five acre farm, whereas in my province or in the other prairie provinces there might be only one man for a section of land. Is there any basis set up which would provide some equality in the decisions by the mobilization boards across Canada?

Mr. MITCHELL: I will answer my hon. friend's question, but I think it should be understood that we discussed this matter for two days. The last speaker and the one before him are really out of order. Giving my own personal opinion, I do not think it is possible to do it on that basis. I would rather rely on the common sense of my Manitoba or Saskatchewan friends. I do not know whether