

Defence of Canada Regulations

badly wounded; quite a number were killed in action, and to-day many of them belong to that branch of the legion which operates in my end of the city. I believe, however, that some of those citizens have suffered rather unfairly during the present war. A case I have in mind, which I shall outline to the house, is one of a class which I should hope some of the regulations might cover. If so, I should wish that such regulations might be reviewed by the committee.

The young man I have in mind is now thirty to thirty-five years of age. At the time of the great war he was a lad of only four or five years. His father had been a United States citizen before the great war, but shortly before the outbreak of that war he came to Canada bringing his young children with him. They have lived in Toronto ever since as good, law-abiding citizens. Shortly after Italy entered this war the young man in question, in company with a number of others, was at once set upon by, I presume, the police. This one in particular consulted a solicitor in down-town Toronto to find out if he must submit to attacks by the police. He had been told by them that he was not a British citizen. The fact is that he was born in the United States.

Following his seeing a solicitor he came to see me, and as a result of his visit I wrote the Department of Justice, setting out full particulars. I did not ask for redress, stating in my letter nothing but the bare facts. The department replied with a very friendly letter stating that since the boy's father was a naturalized British citizen who had come here prior to the great war, the children were British citizens too and exempt from police check, so long as they were law-abiding citizens. I sent that letter to the young man. Following that, it is said that his solicitor sent him a bill for \$175. That solicitor had done no more than I had.

Mr. ROEBUCK: He could have the solicitor's bill taxed.

An hon. MEMBER: What did you charge?

Mr. MacNICOL: I do things free; I do not charge anything for anything I do.

I do not believe any person of non-English origin should be subjected to such treatment simply because he is not of British origin.

Mr. ROEBUCK: I think my hon. friend misunderstood my interruption. I pointed out that the person in question could have the solicitor's bill taxed if it is too high.

An hon. MEMBER: Meaning what?

Mr. ROEBUCK: "Meaning what?" an hon. member to my right asks. We have an office

[Mr. MacNicol.]

connected with the courts of Ontario whose duty it is to review solicitors' bills. If my hon. friend would submit that bill to the taxing officer, the right amount would be substituted.

Mr. MacNICOL: I shall send a copy of to-day's *Hansard* to the gentleman in question, and he may take the bill and *Hansard* to the taxing officer to see if he can get redress. After Italy went into the war Italians in Toronto were generally more or less—I will not say persecuted, but many of them were.

Mr. ROEBUCK: "Persecuted" is right.

Mr. MacNICOL: I suppose they preferred to grin and bear anything inflicted upon them rather than protest, and I believe that was the condition in this instance.

Quite a number of Italians in my constituency have enlisted and have gone overseas to serve in the present war. I have in mind the father of a family of six or eight children, two of whom are in the army. That father, however, has been picked up and placed in an internment camp. I have not written the Minister of Justice about him, because I do not know whether a layman may properly report matters of that kind. The fact is, however, that the father has been interned for some time. On a number of occasions his wife has been to see me, and I have seen her hair change from jet black to gray, from worrying about her husband, the head of the house, who has been placed in the internment camp.

If internment regulations are to be reviewed I should hope that some regulations might be made whereby a man might have an opportunity to present his case before a legal tribunal. I do not know anything about law or courts; I am not a lawyer. But under present regulations such people do not appear to have a chance. The man I have in mind has been in the camp ever since Italy entered the war, despite the fact that he has two sons in the army. So far as I know the family has always been loyal, and I should hope that regulations affecting such people might be applied with a certain amount of sympathy and British fair play.

Certainly I would be opposed to the release of anyone who should be interned. I agree with the hon. member for Parry Sound (Mr. Slaght) when he said in effect that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. If any person of any non-British nationality is known to be a person of dangerous proclivities, then I say that such person is better in a camp than out of it. But with respect to the ordinary humble citizen who could not under any circumstances be considered dangerous, and particularly a citizen who has been here