

Conant Vows Pressure On Farming Manpower

In face of the farm help shortage, Premier Gordon Conant promised the Legislature yesterday afternoon that "we'll turn on the heat" after the present session to get Ottawa and the Selective Service Board to get manpower back to the farm.

A large newspaper advertisement, brought to the attention of the House by Opposition Leader George Drew, elicited the Premier's statement. The advertisement was headed: "We can't fight if we don't eat—we won't eat if you don't help Ontario farmers this summer." It was sponsored by the Dominion-Provincial Committee on Farm Labor, and, Col. Drew said, was obviously inserted by authority of the Department of Agriculture.

The situation was urgent, and drastic action was called for, Col. Drew said. County agricultural committees should be given authority to organize manpower. If Ontario had not adequate powers it should be done through Ottawa. Morgan Baker (Lib., North York) urged organizing of men in cities and towns willing to forgo part of their summer holidays, and praised the effort of Mayor Conboy of Toronto in this direction last year.

"The manpower of the nation is under control of the Dominion authority," Premier Conant replied. "I think Ottawa has been dilatory in this problem. They froze farm labor too late. Farm labor should have been frozen in 1941 and kept on the farm." There was a movement in that direction now, he said, but it ought to be extended much further.

"Comb every business, every industry, every drug store, and send men to the farm, compulsorily if necessary, to harvest the crops. It's not Conant Commandos this time, but two-armed Commandos who are needed, and if expenditure of money by this Government will do anything we're quite willing to do it," said the Premier.