

SHORT SHRIFT FOR ALIENS

Special Regulations Enacted for Their Summary Internment

PROCEDURE IS SIMPLE

Local Committees Expected to be Formed—Hamilton Already Designated

(Canadian Press Despatch.)

Ottawa, Feb. 13. — The Government, it is announced, has taken decisive action in the matter of dealing with alien enemies. Indications have been most pronounced for some time that a growing feeling of hostility was developing in various portions of the Dominion against alien enemies, most of whom had been during the war, and have not so conducted themselves as to show appreciation of the citizenship they were enjoying and for which others were fighting. On the other hand, the behavior of many was creditable in every way. Already the force of public feeling has shown itself in some larger cities.

The general demand has been for deportation, but, as has been clearly set out in statements and press articles that have already appeared, deportation to enemy countries is possible only under such terms and in such numbers as the allied powers may permit.

To the extent that deportation can be availed of it will be carried on to the end that all alien enemies who have shown hostility or become undesirable as citizens be gotten rid of. In the meantime it is intended to take care of the situation by internment.

Special Summary Regulations.

Special regulations have to-day been enacted by the Governor in Council under the powers conferred by the War Measures Act, 1914, and now have the force of law, whereby, with respect to localities to be designated by the Minister of Justice, power is conferred upon the County and District Judges of the Superior Court to direct the internment as prisoners of war of persons of alien enemy nationality residing or being within the designated localities.

The procedure is of a summary character and very simple. The Judge of the locality, or, upon his request, any Judge having like powers for another county or district, may, upon summary complaint by any municipal or local authorities, or by any person who, in the opinion of the Judge, is sufficiently representative of the feeling of the community to lay a complaint, inquire and determine summarily whether it is expedient for maintaining or securing the public peace or safety, or for the prevention of any disturbance, that such person should, in view of his hostile nationality, be interned as a prisoner of war. If the Judge be of opinion that such person ought to be interned, he is to grant an order to that effect, whereupon the person may be apprehended and interned by any peace officer or by any military officer, non-commissioned officer or man thereunto deputed.

For the purposes of this inquiry the Judge may in his discretion either cause the man to be brought before him, or he may proceed in his absence, and with or without notice, and the person charged is not to be represented by counsel unless by the special authorization of the Judge. The persons whom the Judge orders to be interned are to be subject to the like custody, detention and treatment as prisoners of war interned in ordinary and due course of law.

Local Committees to Review Cases.

It is anticipated that in cities or other localities where the alien enemy question is provoking agitation and exceptional difficulty, committees of representative citizens will be locally constituted, whose duty it will be carefully to review the cases of aliens of enemy nationality who are living in the locality, and to inform and assist the Judge by bringing to his attention and submitting for the exercise of his powers all cases with respect to which he should, in the opinion of these committees, adjudicate. In this manner it is apprehended that they can be disposed of expeditiously and with due regard to the merits and requirements of each particular case.

The Minister has already designated the city of Hamilton as a locality within which the powers above described may be executed.