

Eight Draft Duckers, 39 Deserters, in Federal Prisons

THE Legion's case in opposing the release of the so-called "political prisoners" now in Federal custody for wartime offenses is set forth by John Thomas Taylor, vice-chairman of the Legion's National Legislative Committee, in the September issue of *Caveat*.

Mr. Taylor points out that when President Harding offered commutation of sentence to 27 of 52 prisoners for whom amnesty was sought, "there was a fly in the ointment. In order to obtain their freedom, the criminals were required to sign an agreement providing that they would be 'law-abiding and loyal to the Government of the United States.'" Eleven of the 27 signed the agreement and were given their liberty, the other sixteen electing to remain in prison.

Only eight men are serving sentences as draft deserters in Federal penitentiaries, Mr. Taylor declares. "Yet," he adds, "the number of men who evaded the draft, defying our country in its hour of need, was many times the number who deserted the Army after the Armistice." Thirty-nine men, he states, are still serving time for desertion from the Army, and the draft deserters are serving shorter average sentences than are the soldiers who took unauthorized leave of the service after the Armistice.