

Mr. McKENZIE: Not cheerfully.

Mr. McCURDY: Well, willingly.

Mr. McKENZIE: Not willingly.

Mr. McCURDY: Silently.

Mr. McKENZIE: I was always a kicker about the city of Ottawa expenditures.

Mr. McCURDY: The fact is that this item has appeared year after year without my hon. friend publicly objecting to it. It has become quite an institution, and one would not like to see an old institution rooted up. I think the hon. member for Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. McKenzie) would be the last man who would want to destroy an ancient landmark.

Mr. SINCLAIR\* (Guysborough): This item, is reduced something like \$15,000, and I presume the greater part of it is paid to women who clean out the departmental buildings. Seeing them coming out of the departmental buildings in the morning looking very tired, I am surprised to find that while large increases have been given in most of the other items, there is a reduction of \$15,000 in this one. I hope this is not taken off the charwomen. If it is, I would feel like protesting against it. We have increased the item: Repairs, furniture, grounds, by \$150,000. We have increased the item: Dominion public buildings, repairs, furniture, by \$30,000. We have increased the item: Fittings and general supplies and furniture, by a large amount, and also rents. I would be sorry to think that we are giving the landlords a large increase of \$60,000 and docking the charwomen who clean the buildings. Why are these large increases made in rents and certain other items? This is a time when increases should not be made, especially in rents.

Mr. McCURDY: I have pleasure in assuring the committee that the saving in expenses under this heading does not fall on the charwomen. On the contrary the charwomen are this year receiving \$1.25, where formerly they received one dollar. There has been, and I hope there will continue to be an improvement in the operation of the service. We are getting more efficient work from those who are serving on the staff; we are paying them a little better wage, and the net result is that we are able to operate this year at a reduced cost. As regards rentals the rental of public buildings is a burning question.

Mr. SINCLAIR: It is constantly growing.

[Mr. McCurdy.]

Mr. McCURDY: It has been growing, but the growth as exhibited in this appropriation is apparent rather than real, for the reason that formerly a number of rentals of buildings charged to this appropriation were carried in the demobilization vote. The money was spent just the same, but it was paid under a different vote. While I am speaking of rents, I am sure members of the committee will be interested in knowing that strong resistance has been maintained by the department this year against increases in rents. I took the position early in this year that a rental that was sufficient last year should be sufficient this year, and I have steadfastly set my face against any rental increases. That is an attitude which is not appreciated by owners of buildings; I have had strong representations, in many cases where the amount of rental was substantial, to increase the rents, but I have been able, with very few and isolated exceptions, to hold rents to those of last year and, in some cases, to effect a reduction. Generally speaking, the increase in the item of rents is due to the fact that certain buildings that are shown under this heading this year were last year shown under the demobilization vote.

Mr. COPP: I took up this matter of rents the other day, and it was held over in order that information might be obtained. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman has the complete list of rented buildings before him or not.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steele): I might point out to the hon. gentleman that he was not in the chamber when the item was called. The item is:

Departments generally—care and cleaning departmental buildings including \$100 to E. Snowden for firing noon gun, \$385,000.

The item of rents comes a little later on.

Mr. COPP: If that item has not been reached, I do not desire to discuss it now.

Item agreed to.

Repairs, furniture, grounds, snow and street maintenance, \$700,000.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Guysborough): There is an increase of \$150,000.

Mr. CHISHOLM: And less snow last winter.

Mr. McCURDY: My hon. friend is probably aware that during the year it was necessary to furnish the income tax offices. That is one item which has fallen on us quite heavily this year. In general there