

Supply—National Defence

crown, who sat in this house for many years. On the other hand, the member who has provoked these statements claims that he did not want to attack the memory of the late minister, and he has risen on a question of privilege to have words withdrawn that are attributed to some statement he has made, such as the word "nasty". As he says, this word appears in a long list of those words which, at one time or another, have been considered unparliamentary.

I think that perhaps we should look at this incident in another way. Impartial as I am in this dispute, I think the committee will permit me to ask hon. members if, from the point of view of prestige, decorum and order, we are gaining much by pursuing this discussion. I shall ask the hon. member for Souris to continue his remarks, but I would ask him also to bear in mind the remarks I have just made. I believe the members of the committee should now consider taking up a suggestion which was made by the hon. member for Nanaimo and the Minister of National Defence, and that is to study the details of the estimates as shown on page 269. We could proceed by calling each heading: administration, civil defence, general services, and so on.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I bow to your ruling, as you know sir, and I shall withdraw the word "nasty" if it is improper. I still must maintain that I believe it very undignified and very improper for a member of this House of Commons to speak of a past member as was done this evening. I believe my good friend the hon. member for Temiscouata, after having had time to think this over, will be parliamentarian enough to get up and apologize for some of the words—

Mr. Pouliot: Well, well, I do not want a lecture.

Mr. Ross (Souris): He may withdraw the statement he made about the minister of national defence being responsible for the loss of Canadian lives. I shall go further, Mr. Chairman, and say that I was surprised the Minister of National Defence did not attempt to get up as soon as the member sat down and refute some of those statements, or defend the former minister of national defence whom he served in this government during those war years. I know the Minister of National Defence was a very good soldier in the first war. I am sure when he has time to think this over he will refute the statement made by a member of his party this evening, and will speak on behalf of his old colleague the late Colonel Ralston. I know he is the

type of soldier, minister, and member of this House of Commons who will do that when he replies.

I do not wish to say anything further about that, but I hope we do not have any more remarks like that about a great public servant, and a great Canadian citizen, such as the late Colonel Ralston. With respect to these estimates, in view of the requests that have been made in the past, it is possible that the Minister of National Defence may decide, after consideration, to set up a committee of this house on national defence. As I listened to the member for Temiscouata, I thought he was most inconsistent. He said we now had a select committee of this House of Commons, and then he proceeded to ridicule the idea of giving certain information publicly to this committee. The idea in setting up a select committee composed of members from all parties of this house is to give them access to information, and an opportunity to question some officials who cannot be questioned under our procedure in this house. I think that is very proper, and I am very keen about having a committee set up during a time of great international distress such as we now have.

There is another matter about which I am personally very much concerned. I want to make a request to the minister, and to the government, that those people who are actually serving in a theatre of war—young men are dying for us in a theatre of war today—and who are making this great sacrifice, should be exempt from income tax. I do not say that the people who will be going to Europe prior to the declaration of war there should receive that consideration. I do not believe there is a patriotic citizen in Canada who would not be willing to exempt from taxation the troops who are actually serving in a theatre of war. I believe that is the least this government can do. I want to make a very earnest plea to the minister to use his influence with his colleagues and have that done.

I was very surprised to hear the minister state—at least I thought he did—that it was very difficult to find an area large enough in this great nation of ours to handle brigade training. Surely that can be brought into being in this country. If I followed the minister correctly, that was what he implied. We have examples in Great Britain, where they have had a committee such as the one for which we have been asking here. I am sure that committee has rendered great service to the taxpayers of that country without giving any information to the enemy. It is just drawing a red herring across the trail to make accusations such as that. There