

Supply—National Defence

Mr. Claxton: We shall certainly pick out the major items if we can.

Mr. Fulton: There is an amount asked for civil servants, salaries and wages. In other departments it is possible to get a break-down of the personnel administering the department. I am not asking for anything like a war establishment of the personnel in the army, navy, and so on, but for departmental administration. It seems to me there would not be any prejudice to security if the various personnel engaged at headquarters were broken down so we could see how many there are and what is paid. Could that be done in future years?

Mr. Claxton: That information was given on June 9 at page 3462 of *Hansard*, in reply to a question by the member for Nanaimo. As you can see it occupies the best part of one column in very fine print. There is no difficulty about giving that information, but we have approximately 23,000 civilians in the department.

Mr. Fulton: At headquarters?

Mr. Claxton: No, all the information for headquarters has been given. If it were given for all the permanent and temporary civil servants, properly so-called, it would run into a great number of pages. I do not know that it would mean anything to hon. members, but if it is felt it would be desirable to give it for Ottawa national defence headquarters, I am sure we could give consideration to that.

Mr. Fulton: The next thing I should like to know is whether it would be possible to set up the estimates in such a way that we could see how many military personnel are engaged at headquarters, and their pay and allowances, for the army, navy and air force personnel. Could it be included in departmental administration? As I understand, at present the pay and allowances for the army, including those persons at headquarters, are included under "pay and allowances, army". The same is true for the navy and the air force.

Mr. Claxton: I appreciate the point. As the hon. member says, all pay and allowances for the officers and men of the three services are found in pay and allowances for the three services, and not under administration. The number of those involved at headquarters I gave this morning. Because of the way in which the books are kept, it would not be possible to pick out the pay and allowances of these officers without looking at the accounts for each separate one at some given date. That could be done, but it would cost a great deal to get the information. I do not

know what use it would be, but it would be possible. The books are not kept in such a way as to permit that to be done without a special operation.

Mr. Higgins: I have one specific point to raise with the minister concerning the runways at Gander airport. I spoke to the minister about the necessity of lengthening them before, and he informed me, as far as I remember, that they were quite adequate. I understand that the minister proposes to visit Newfoundland shortly and that he will likely land at Gander airport. If he does so, I should like him to make a little investigation himself and to do a little bit of questioning.

The information I have at the present time is that all last spring the Boeings either had to overfly or had to land at Goose. The airways have now been temporarily repaired. Sections have been taken up and they have been filled in and resurfaced; but the runways at Gander look like a mosaic patchwork. The Boeing aircraft are unable to use these runways at any time at any temperature over 40 degrees. That means that if they land and the temperature is not right they have to wait till night or wait until the temperature goes down. The necessity for lengthening the runways is a most important consideration. Even in the past two weeks Boeing aircraft, after many tries, and not being able to get off the ground, finally had to unload fifteen hundred pounds of cargo.

While the department administering Gander is of course the Department of Trade and Commerce, nevertheless I feel that the minister must be vitally interested in this matter, especially in view of the significance of recent events which may make the use of Gander airport by large bombers a matter of urgency. I think it is important that the minister should take that situation into consideration because if those facts are correct—and from the information I have received, I have no reason to believe otherwise—the airport at present cannot be used by large planes.

Mr. Claxton: I shall be glad indeed to do that. Following the hon. member's previous question, I myself made inquiries and found that Gander is at present adequate to handle all Canadian aircraft. But as he says, I hope to visit the airport after the adjournment. One of the purposes of the visit is to see the progress being made on the defence installation and the reserve army units. I am sure the Minister of Transport will not object to my viewing Gander, and I shall be glad to report to him on my return.