

police started to make an investigation and discovered that almost every boy in the local school had gathered up some live ammunition and hid it somewhere. As a matter of fact, under one farmer's barn they discovered hundreds of live shells. According to the latest report the boy, by the name of Mitchell, who had the accident will lose his hand, and his life may be in danger. Severe measures should be taken against those who were guilty of such gross negligence in disposing of ammunition in that way. The statement may be made on their behalf that they were not aware when they dumped live cartridges into the water that the tide would go out and leave them high and dry. But apart from that, even if they were so ignorant of conditions in the district, long rows of live cartridges were also discovered in certain ditches where they had just been left for disposal. Many of these cartridges might have exploded, with serious results. I would ask the minister if a report has been made on the matter, because I can assure him that the people in the district view very seriously what they regard as neglect of duty on the part of some of the officials at Boundary Bay airport.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): The matter was brought to my attention some time ago and I made inquiries to find out just what the situation was. There was a certain amount of surplus ammunition, pyrotechnics, tracer bullets and other types of ammunition which do not have a very long life; but some types become dangerous the older they get. There was a surplus quantity at Boundary Bay to be disposed of, and it appears that some of this ammunition got into the hands of children and others. A court of inquiry is being held at the present time to ascertain who is responsible for the handling of the ammunition and to find out if there was negligence in allowing it to get into the hands of unauthorized persons. If it is shown that there has been carelessness or neglect on the part of officers or members of the air force I can certainly say that disciplinary action will be taken.

It is customary to dump ammunition in the sea. I do not think the hon. member is quite correct in this case. As I understand it, it was not faulty dumping. Some of the material which was to be disposed of was taken out on the mud flats, and the explosion on detonating had evidently buried some of the ammunition without destroying it. Later on, with the washing of the sea, some of the ammunition which had not been exploded but had been buried, came to the surface and was picked up by the children. I have not yet received a full report on the matter, but

[Mr. Reid.]

that seems to have been the cause of some of this ammunition becoming available to the children in the neighbourhood.

Mr. MacNICOL: A pretty serious situation, is it not?

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): Yes.

Item agreed to.

Mechanical transport and marine craft, \$2,451,532.

Mr. ARCHIBALD: I should like to say a few words about this item. A considerable amount of money is involved in the present maintenance of mechanical transport, but what I am more interested in is the personnel around such departments as the M.T. section. For example, on November 3, personnel of the M.T. repair, No. 10 repair depot, Calgary, consisted of one flight lieutenant, one W.O.2, one flight sergeant, two sergeants, five corporals and four L.A.C.'s. That represents a terrific waste of money, because any officer or non-commissioned officer would be a fool if he did any physical work. The maintenance of the equipment and so on devolves on the "Joe". The point is this. Many of the men in the M.T. section want discharges; some of them, I gather, have very high points and are due for discharge, and they see men with fewer points in other sections being discharged. One can well understand why the costs go up.

I have here a letter from a man in the M.T. section who slept beside me for one year, and this is what happened to him. I will start at the point in his letter where he states that he was posted from Uplands to London. He says he "finally made it to London, so we had dinner, and then started out looking for No. 13 M.T. A.R.S. in London. It was not in the 'phone book, and information desk could not help us; so there we were, posted to No. 13 M.T. A.R.S. in London direct from maintenance command headquarters in Uplands, and nobody in London heard of such a place. So we bumped into a flight sergeant, and he told us that No. 13 M.T. A.R.S. moved to Aylmer over a year ago, and headquarters didn't know anything about it, as they still sent the mail to London. So we phoned the air school or something six miles out, and he said 'I think No. 13 is at Aylmer', so X says 'let's go out to Aylmer.' I did not want to go; I told him we should stay in London and wire headquarters at Uplands that there was no such place, but he didn't want to do it, so we went out, and when we got there we found that No. 13 M.T. A.R.S. at Aylmer had been