

*War Appropriation—Army*

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): These are the men who are living under the grandstand in the stadium. Some consideration ought to be given to building huts for them.

Mr. RALSTON: That is a situation which will be relieved when this move is made.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: While we are on the subject of construction I will review a case for the minister's consideration. I think it has already been called to his attention. On September 11 last, twenty construction men employed by the Royal Canadian Engineers at London were discharged without being given any notice or any pay in lieu of notice. The matter was referred to selective service by the local union, and I have here copies of correspondence in which the assistant director of national selective service assures the Canadian Congress of Labour that the work on which these men were engaged was not casual work and did not come within the conditions where discharge was possible without notice. I have here one letter in which he assures the secretary of the Canadian Congress of Labour that every effort is being made to induce national defence to pay these men their seven days' pay. He says in that letter:

I should hate to have to take legal action on the part of national selective service against national defence.

This matter has dragged on for more than eight months. The last correspondence I had was a letter from the Minister of Labour dated April 24, in which he says he is sending a special officer in to investigate the situation,—

Mr. RALSTON: What is the date of that?

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: —and was to let me have a reply immediately. That is more than a month ago, and still these men are waiting for their seven days pay. Has the minister any information on this matter?

Mr. RALSTON: Perhaps my hon. friend wrote me about it. I had forgotten about it until I asked my officers here. They tell me that the facts are as my hon. friend has stated, namely that these men were discharged without the seven days' notice and it was claimed that seven days' notice should be given. Apparently there has been some ruling by national selective service. Remarkably enough, the assistant deputy minister tells me that we cabled London for a telegraphic report which ought to be in to-day. That is to say, we did not want to deal with the matter until we had communicated with Lon-

[Mr. Ralston.]

don to find out if the district officer commanding had any comments. I take it that the matter will be dealt with promptly, as soon as the report is received.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: There are a few questions I should like to ask in reference to this item. I think the discussion which has taken place so far indicates how impossible it is for the member of this house properly to check expenditure. The minister answered a while ago that to break down this item of \$108 millions would be impossible because of the expenditures which are being made overseas.

Mr. RALSTON: Oh, no. I gave all the subjects. I did not give the amounts, that is all.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I understand the amounts were given.

Mr. RALSTON: I gave the items.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: But there is no break-down as to the items.

Mr. RALSTON: Oh, yes. I gave a long list of items.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Not the necessary particulars.

Mr. RALSTON: Yes. I did not give the places.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: No, I understand. That is just a break-down in amounts; that \$108 millions is being broken down in the following particulars—

Mr. RALSTON: That is right.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: —but no opportunity comes thereby to make any close examination.

Mr. RALSTON: Well now, wait. Let us get off on an even keel. For instance, coast defence was one of the items. My hon. friend does not expect me and will not ask me to give the places where coast defence expenditures are being made and how much they are.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: That is true; coast defence, so many million dollars.

Mr. RALSTON: Well, does my hon. friend expect me to give the committee all the particulars?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: No.

Mr. RALSTON: I thought not.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: But I am just indicating how utterly fruitless it is to try to make any check of expenditures which have been or