

War Appropriation—Army

Mr. RALSTON: I am talking of pay and allowances of guards.

Mr. ADAMSON: I know; that is why this item is reduced. I realize that. I know, however, these men are working in industry and presumably receiving civilian rates of pay. I came across a case the other day where prisoners of war actually had to pay dues to a union because they were working in civilian occupations. This is a United States item and it is reported in a New York paper. I quote from an editorial:

Almost anybody would at first give way to the impulse to condemn such a situation as that in Bridgetown, New Jersey, where German prisoners are expected to pay dues to an A.F. of L. local of amalgamated meat cutters and butchers' workmen. On second thought, however, that policy has bright possibilities.

I will not read the rest of the story, but here we have a situation where German prisoners of war are actually paying dues.

Mr. MITCHELL: That is not in Canada?

Mr. ADAMSON: No.

Mr. MITCHELL: Stay back home.

Mr. ADAMSON: Nevertheless I think we should have some clarification of the method of paying prisoners of war in Canada.

Mr. RALSTON: I would ask my hon. friend, as I did the hon. member for Laval-Two Mountains, to be good enough to defer these questions until the Department of Labour appropriation comes up. This has nothing to do with the item before us. This item has to do with the administration of the camps. It has no reference to employment of prisoners of war, nor has it anything to do with the policy as to why they are there. It is not under the Department of National Defence at all.

Mr. ADAMSON: The prisoners I speak of are actually in an internment camp.

Mr. RALSTON: All we are interested in is supplying the guards. The internees are sent out under order in council, and the Minister of Labour is making the necessary arrangements with regard to the matter. I only ask the committee to keep to the subject.

Mr. ADAMSON: But does that apply to men in special camps cutting wood—the forestry camps? There are special forestry camps, I understand.

Mr. RALSTON: I think so.

Mr. ADAMSON: Do they come under the Minister of Labour or under the Department of National Defence?

[Mr. Adamson.]

Mr. RALSTON: If they are receiving pay they come under the Minister of Labour; that is to say, the rate of pay comes under him. I believe my colleague will remember some discussions with regard to this matter, which has to do with external affairs and the Department of Labour.

Mr. ADAMSON: I am glad it has been brought up because we at least have that clarification of it.

Mr. MITCHELL: There are to my knowledge no prisoners of war in Canada paying dues into any union. The secretary of labour in the United States will take the onus for that situation. When this item comes under my estimates I shall be glad to satisfy my hon. friend with reference to the work done by prisoners of war in Canada.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Is the question of the cost of these prisoners of war camps a matter altogether under external affairs?

Mr. RALSTON: As a matter of fact, the arrangement is made through external affairs with the British government. The actual money spent for the building of the camps was spent by my department.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): And the manning of the camps?

Mr. RALSTON: Yes.

Mr. ADAMSON: One more question. This was discussed at some length this afternoon. I refer to the question of clothing allowance for the soldier, sailor or airman leaving the service. I was in receipt to-day of a communication from the Toronto rehabilitation committee giving what they considered the cost of adequate clothing for a soldier leaving the army, and I think it would be interesting to the committee to have that information now. One paragraph of the letter reads:

As to clothing, you will notice the committee recommend \$35 for men with less than six months' service—

Mr. RALSTON: I hate to interrupt my hon. friend again because he generally sticks closely to the text, but this has nothing to do with dependents' allowance. It is a clothing allowance.

Mr. ADAMSON: But the clothing allowance was brought up this afternoon.

Mr. RALSTON: I did not hear it brought up.

Mr. ADAMSON: Yes; it was discussed at some length.