

Supply—Trade and Commerce

the development of that property, but I should like to know whether the minister is in a position to say what progress is being made.

Mr. Howe: Mr. Chairman, that development is a private enterprise, and just how much information I should give the committee is questionable. Therefore I do not think I will give very much. As my hon. friend knows, five important steel companies of the United States are interested in financing the development at the moment. I know that plans are being prepared for the railway that will serve the property, for the power plant that will deliver power to it, and for the harbour development to serve the property. Beyond that I do not think I can give any information.

Mr. Charlton: At page 268 in the details I see that there are fifteen fewer employees under this item than there were last year, and salaries are approximately \$2,300 less. Is the smaller number of employees because of less work or is it simply a case of somebody else doing the work?

Mr. Howe: The department has dropped certain controls such as timber control, priorities control, and steel control, and as a result a number of high-priced employees have left the department. That explains the drop.

Mr. Charlton: Those employees will be listed in the various branches. This item simply deals with departmental administration.

Mr. Howe: As my hon. friend knows, the department is an amalgamation of trade and commerce and reconstruction and supply, and certain positions that were in the department organization last year have been dropped.

Mr. Charlton: Will the minister explain the item of \$8,000 for sundries? I believe there are three items for sundries each of \$8,000.

Mr. Howe: It is a general catch-all item for matters that are too small to set forth in detail. There is nothing very alarming about it. I thought we were discussing ministers' salaries. Is the minister's salary carried? I am anxious about that.

Mr. Graydon: That is statutory. The minister must be under a wrong impression. The statute many years ago gave him that so nothing we can do can take it away. He should not have such fear.

Mr. Fraser: That is one thing he does not control.

Item agreed to.

[Mr. Browne (St. John's West).]

General administration—

424. Commodities branch, including assistance in the development of markets and the procurement of supplies, and contributions as detailed in the estimates, \$574,460.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): I want to draw the minister's attention to the wording of item 424 and ask him to give a little further explanation. It reads:

Commodities branch, including assistance in the development of markets—

I understand that.

—and the procurement of supplies—

I am not so clear about that.

—and contributions as detailed in the estimates.

Will the minister say a word about the procurement side of it?

Mr. Howe: The commodities branch includes the import branch. The import branch is a sub-branch of the commodities branch.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): Is it procurement of supplies for public purposes?

Mr. Howe: It is to assist private enterprise to procure supplies abroad.

Item agreed to.

General administration—

425. Trade commissioner service including payment of compensation to trade commissioners for damage to and loss of furniture and effects, under regulations approved by the governor in council, \$2,052,859.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Can the minister tell me about the representation that is given the province of Newfoundland? Before confederation we had trade commissioners in London, Portugal, New York, and I believe in the West Indies. Has that been taken over by the federal government?

Mr. Howe: Yes; the personnel of the Newfoundland service have been absorbed into the trade commissioner service of the Department of Trade and Commerce. Instead of having representation in four or five countries, Newfoundland now has representation in forty-six countries.

Mr. Charlton: What is the total number of foreign service officers?

Mr. Howe: There are ninety-five trade commission offices in forty-six countries.

Mr. Charlton: There are only 113 employees altogether. Are ninety-five of those trade commissioners? The details show that twenty-five are foreign service officers. Are there ninety-five trade commissioners?

Mr. Howe: Trade commissioners and assistant trade commissioners. Sometimes in