

*Supply—Finance*

administrative expenses which have been incurred by the crown and the vote of \$310,000 is required for the administrative expenses together with the Joy Oil settlement and to allow for any further minor payments that may come up during the current fiscal year, the year which will end in the next day or two.

To give an indication of the way the assets of the former corporation stand, of accounts receivable of \$72,207.70, \$4,027.78 has been collected, leaving uncollected accounts at \$68,179.92. As the committee will appreciate, these accounts have been outstanding for a very considerable time, and I would not place a very high value on them.

Item agreed to.

565. Grants to municipalities in lieu of taxes on federal property—To provide for payments to municipalities in accordance with the Municipal Grants Act, and the rural municipal grants regulations established by order in council of August 6, 1952, P.C. 3729; and to provide for payments to municipalities under order in council of July 19, 1950, P.C. 3456, in respect of the cost of medical and hospital services and supplies furnished to federal employees and other persons specified therein—further amount required including authority to regard the admiralty properties in the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, as federal property notwithstanding that formal transfer of administration has not been completed, \$343,783.

**Mr. Ellis:** Would the minister outline the formula by which grants are made to municipalities under the Municipal Grants Act?

**Mr. Abbott:** I could do that, but I wonder if my hon. friend would be content to allow his question to stand. On the order paper I have a resolution preceding the introduction of a bill to amend the Municipal Grants Act which I hope we will be dealing with next week. I am going to make a rather full statement at that time both with respect to present policy and the contemplated changes. If it meets my hon. friend's convenience, I would prefer to do it then, but if he wants a brief explanation now I would be happy to give it to him.

**Mr. Ellis:** I think that will be satisfactory. I merely wanted the explanation before we came to the main estimates.

**Mr. Abbott:** I hope, if the house leader so arranges it, to reach the amendments to the Municipal Grants Act next week some time, and at that time I hope we may have a full discussion of the whole problem.

**Mr. Ellis:** That will be quite satisfactory.

**Mr. Abbott:** I should add that this vote is simply to implement existing policy.

**Mr. Stick:** There is a reference to "further amount required including authority to regard the admiralty properties in the city

[Mr. Abbott.]

of St. John's, Newfoundland, as federal property". What was the total amount paid for the admiralty properties?

**Mr. Abbott:** I will see if I have that here.

**Mr. Stick:** Will this finish the payments to Great Britain on that account?

**Mr. Abbott:** I am afraid I do not have that breakdown here but I will have it when we debate the main item. Total payments in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1953-54 are \$15,741, but I do not have the detail here as to how that is broken down.

**Mr. Stick:** You can give it to me some other time.

**Mr. Abbott:** I will do it when we are on the Municipal Grants Act.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** I want to read the last part of this item. It reads:

... further amount required including authority to regard the admiralty properties in the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, as federal property notwithstanding that formal transfer of administration has not been completed.

I am a little confused about that. I know that occasionally in this committee we have what is called legislation by item, but up to the present time I have understood that if there was doubt finally whether there was any authority for the item, which has happened on one or two occasions, once it was voted here that settled the matter anyhow. But does this mean that we are conveying title to property by item?

**Mr. Abbott:** No, that is under discussion. That admiralty property is property in St. John's, Newfoundland, which belongs to the British admiralty, as I remember it, and has for a great many years. We are occupying it and I dare say may be renting some of it. The purpose of this item is to make it clear that we can base our tax grant to the city of St. John's on that property as well as property to which we already have title. So far as that property is concerned, discussions for the transfer of title to the crown in the right of Canada are still proceeding, but we are using it.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** But it is your full intention to acquire it?

**Mr. Abbott:** Oh, it is understood we are going to acquire it. It is just that the legal details have not been worked out yet.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** As this is a supplementary item, what was the total amount?

**Mr. Abbott:** The total amount this year, including this item, will be \$3,045,083.