

clerically \$22,143. In British Columbia the total expenditure on the items of district supervisors, inspectors and guardians is only \$117,360; but they expended, in overseeing that expenditure, \$50,448. Therefore, British Columbia spent on actual work nearly one-third less than that spent in Nova Scotia while it cost twice as much to take care of the spending. Let me put this in another way. In Nova Scotia each dollar spent in the office means an expenditure of \$6.89 in the field. In British Columbia each dollar spent in the office means an expenditure of only \$2.30 in the field. Note the difference. Let me put it on a percentage basis. In Nova Scotia on a field expenditure of, in round figures, \$153,000, it cost 14 per cent additional to spend that sum, not 14 per cent of that expenditure, but 14 per cent more. In British Columbia, on a field expenditure of \$117,000, it cost 43 per cent more to spend it. There is a great disparity between that and 14 per cent.

Take a line of expenditure very often criticized, and quite unjustly, namely, the pension department of the government; it is often said this branch is over-run with red tape officials. But its expenditure in administering the enormous amount spent on hospitals and so forth runs only to 3.607 per cent.

I wish to ask the minister and the committee: What are we getting for this expenditure of \$50,000 on the Vancouver office? I can tell the minister one thing, and that is we are not getting \$50,000 worth of results. A great deal of this money is spent in red tape. This is the procedure: let us begin at the very bottom. There is a fishery guardian out in the district seeing that there is no poaching over perhaps one bigish river, if it is in an isolated place, or if there are two or three creeks or small rivers close enough so that he can get around them, then he may have charge of half a dozen of those little rivers or creeks. If anything goes wrong or he wants further authority, he reports to the district inspector who has from ten to thirty guardians under him covering an area of thirty to fifty square miles. Then the district inspector reports to the district supervisor. There are three or four of them at strategic points in the province. He reports to the division supervisor in Vancouver, at this office the cost of which I am criticizing, and in turn the supervisor reports to Ottawa, where there are two heads, two competent men, one for the east and one for the west. They in turn report to the deputy, and presumably the deputy reports to the minister. I may

[Mr. Neill.]

say just here that these men who are called eastern and western heads are thoroughly familiar with conditions in the east and west; they have been over almost every mile of the territory. The deputy minister also has a good working knowledge of the different areas and different matters involved. Then when the decision is given by the minister, this same process is slowly and painfully reversed, and finally it drifts back to the man in the field. The process is cumbersome and tends to produce delay, and in fishery matters, which are often a question of hours, delay produces inefficiency.

My suggestion is that we wipe out the Vancouver office and save about \$35,000. I said that the cost was \$50,000, but I realize that we could not save that whole amount. Some of these expenses would have to be carried on; for instance, telegrams would have to be paid for, and presumably a little more clerical help would be needed here, and I would suggest that we pay better salaries to these district inspectors, who are greatly underpaid. A few years ago I knew of one of these men, who had a great deal of responsibility, who was not getting a salary as large as that paid the engineer working under him. These men must have sound judgment, and sometimes they are subject to extreme temptation. I do not suggest that this is the case now, but many years ago I recall that one of these men gave a decision permitting some person to do such and such a thing for three days. And then he disappeared for three days so that the head office could not get at him, and I believe it was made well worth his while to disappear for that time. This is a fine body of men and they are not being paid enough for the responsibilities they must carry. We could pay these men better salaries and still save a great deal of money in connection with that office. We would still have the fisheries guardian reporting to the district inspector, who would report to the district supervisor. These three men are familiar with local conditions, and their opinions would be sent direct to the division head here in Ottawa, who is also familiar with those conditions and who would forward them to the deputy. Surely that is enough, three men in British Columbia and two in Ottawa familiar with the problems which may arise in that area.

We hear a great deal about economy, and as I have said some of it is unwise. Here is an opportunity to save money and at the same time promote efficiency. The business men—and I am talking principally about the canner, by which I mean more than the man who just cans fish; I refer also to the man