

Supply—National Defence

the matter up with those concerned a few days ago, but it has not yet been settled. I want the minister concerned, whoever he is—I do not know; I cannot run after all the ministers at the same time—to see that this man is given a chance. He should be sent home with enough money on which to live until he feels better.

There is another man who works on the first floor of this building and who has won the Victoria Cross. That man should have some sort of honorary post, a soft job which carries a decent salary. He should be a doorman or messenger in uniform so that he could wear his decorations. He is a modest and humble man. One of the former members for Ottawa looked after him and I had to do the same. I have assured him that he has the sympathy of the whole house. While the position he now holds may not be humiliating in itself, it is not a position worthy of a man who has won the highest military distinction.

An hon. MEMBER: Maybe he was not a brigadier.

Mr. POULIOT: He is much better than the brigadiers we have in M.D. No. 5.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Earlier in the afternoon we decided that we would try to close at six o'clock and it is now about twenty minutes to six. May I suggest that there is not a subject in these supplementary estimates which could not be discussed when the main estimates are before the committee. Perhaps it could be understood that in speaking to the remaining items we will confine ourselves as closely as possible to the item with a view to getting through all items by six o'clock, or if we do not, to sit on until we do finish.

Item agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

668. Miscellaneous maintenance and adjustments (war of 1914-18)—further amount required, \$800.

Mr. PEARKES: May we have an explanation how grants to McGill to cover the years from 1942 to 1945 have anything to do with the war of 1914-18?

Mr. ABBOTT: This is the annual grant of \$200 to McGill for maintenance of the Canadian army museum. The curator of the museum died in September, 1940, and through an oversight the government was not billed for the \$200 grant from 1942 to 1945. The amount was voted each year, but under our system of parliamentary appropriations it

[Mr. Pouliot.]

lapsed at the end of the year. The situation was brought to the attention of the government by McGill early this year and this \$800 covers the grant for the years I mentioned.

Mr. GREEN: I should like to place before the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence a suggestion which is really a repetition of a suggestion made last year; that there should be set up a standing committee of the house on the defence forces. We are moving into a new era in the defence of this country and the defence problems are largely new. The policy is to raise a larger body of men for each of the three services than has ever been raised before. I think there will be some difficulty in raising the required number and it would be of great help if we had a standing committee of this house before whom the chiefs of staff could come and where the defence estimates could be discussed in a thorough manner. Not only would that be more efficient, but it would result in getting the members of the house back of the defence forces to a far greater degree than hitherto, and through them be of help in getting the Canadian people as a whole behind our forces. I can see nothing but good from such a move. In the United States, as the Prime Minister knows, they have in the house of representatives and also in the senate a committee on naval affairs and a committee on military affairs, and I suggest that a committee of that kind should be set up right-away in this house. I think it would be of great benefit.

Mr. COLDWELL: We supported the suggestion last year and we do so again this year.

Mr. ABBOTT: I think I assured my hon. friend last year that his suggestion would receive sympathetic consideration, but I pointed out that the time was too short to do anything about it last session. But I did promise consideration.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think the suggestion of my hon. friend is a very good one and, as the Minister of National Defence has just said, it is one that he is prepared to consider sympathetically. But once again the house will have to ask itself how many committees it can stand. We are enlarging the number and it will have a bearing on the attendance in the house. I think my hon. friend's suggestion of that particular committee is a very good one.

Mr. COLDWELL: There might be a reorganization of the committees. Some of them never sit at all.

Item agreed to.