

War Appropriation—Army

entire operation. The district officers commanding are the men responsible for the actual guarding of the camps.

Mr. BOUCHER: Did I understand the minister to say that this amount of \$8,430,895 covers all expenses of internment camps, including food, clothing and lodging of the internees; maintenance of the institutions, pay of the guards and administration, except in so far as international contributions are concerned?

Mr. RALSTON: That is so.

Mr. GREEN: In a large camp where there are perhaps ten thousand nazis, would the position be that the ruler of that camp within the wires would be the nazi leader, who would have complete control of the ten thousand prisoners?

Mr. RALSTON: I do not want to say "complete control". He looks after the domestic arrangements, shall I say, among the prisoners themselves, with regard to their comfort and matters of that sort. He has no control in the sense of being able to order the prisoners to do certain things. He is rather a liaison officer between the camp commandant and the prisoners.

Mr. GREEN: If the camp commandant wants anything, he deals with the nazi leader?

Mr. RALSTON: That is so, if he is the camp spokesman.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): I understand that many of these internees are sent over from Great Britain to be placed in these camps, and that many prisoners of war are sent here as well. Does Great Britain make any financial contribution toward the cost of these camps?

Mr. RALSTON: Yes. I answered that question a moment ago. I prefer not to disclose the terms of the financial arrangements, but there is a very substantial arrangement, as a matter of fact, in regard to both capital and operation.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Would the minister also indicate what pay is given? I understand the prisoners of war cannot be made to work but, if they volunteer to work, they are paid twenty cents a day extra. Is that correct?

Mr. RALSTON: I think it is twenty cents a day.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): What pay do they get if they are not doing any work, and what pay is given the officers?

[Mr. Ralston.]

Mr. RALSTON: Under the Geneva convention officers receive from the power in whose custody they are, certain pay and allowances, while other ranks are paid small sums by their own government through the protecting power. Other ranks who work are paid twenty cents a day. I cannot give my hon. friend the rates at the moment.

Mr. ADAMSON: One of the causes of friction in the past has been the fact that the responsibility of the district officer commanding started at the wire, while the responsibility of the director of internment operations ended at the wire and began in the compound. I know this is a matter of international arrangement, but there seemed to me to be a certain amount of divided authority, that internment operations looked after the prisoners until they escaped, and that immediately they escaped it became the job of the Canadian military authorities and the veterans' guard, under the district officer commanding. I know that matter has been brought to the attention of the minister on previous occasions, but this has been one of the difficulties in connection with internment operations, and there have been cases where the military authorities have not operated inside the compound as they might have, had there not been this dual authority. Has the minister any information as to what is done in other countries? For instance, what do the Americans do in this regard?

Mr. RALSTON: I think my hon. friend is mistaken with regard to the dual responsibility. The Department of National Defence, under the new arrangement, has absolute responsibility except in one aspect; namely with regard to external relations, which are handled through the Department of External Affairs. In all other respects the Department of National Defence is responsible. As I pointed out, the director of internment operations is a headquarters staff officer at national defence headquarters. He does not have executive power in the sense of allocating troops here, there and the other place. Those troops are allocated by the adjutant-general to the officer commanding the district in which the particular camp is located. There is no such thing as divided responsibility. The hon. member suggested that the military authorities go to the wire and the commissioner of internment operations has jurisdiction inside. That is not correct. The military authorities have complete jurisdiction. The guards are under the Department of National Defence and under the district officer commanding, and are responsible for both interior and exterior