

Supply—National Revenue

grade 4, two clerks, grade 2, and four stenographers, grade 2. The total increase in salaries is \$14,760. The reason for this increased staff is that a number of additional officers are employed in connection with values in the United States and Europe. This automatically increases the work of the department and these positions are consequently provided. In the refund branch there is an increase of four, with a salary increase of \$6,000. The work in this branch has materially increased and the additional staff is therefore necessary. This accounts for the increase of twenty-three in personnel. The National Revenue department, embracing as it does the customs and excise branches and the income tax branch, is the business office of the government. As hon. members can well understand, the work of that department has increased, and notwithstanding the falling in revenue that work must be done. As a matter of fact, I think additional work has been necessitated by the state of the revenue. I am sorry I cannot get along with a smaller staff, but I can assure the committee that the best that can be done in that department is being done by the officers. The committee may regret the fact that we have this addition in the personnel, but it is unavoidable.

Mr. RINFRET: Seeing that so many of the powers of the minister are to be taken from him and conferred upon the new tariff board, may we expect that there will be a reduction in his staff within a few months or another year? Although I appreciate the minister's remarks, it must be recognized that it is hard on the exchequer to provide this increase with the revenues of the department in their present state. I accept the minister's explanation, but as I have pointed out, if the tariff board is to be invested with some of his powers one would naturally like to know whether at some future time a reduction in his staff may be expected.

Mr. RYCKMAN: If as a result of the functioning of the tariff board there is less work for the Department of National Revenue to do, I may say emphatically that such a condition will be reflected in the expenditures which the government is required to meet in connection with that department.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I understand that the customs examiner in the town of Golden, British Columbia, was the other day appointed president of the local Conservative association. Is it not undesirable for a customs officer to be president of a political association, Liberal or Conservative?

[Mr. Ryckman.]

Mr. RYCKMAN: I had not been informed of the fact the hon. gentleman has stated. I quite agree with him that no official of the government, under section 55 of the Civil Service Act, can be countenanced in lending himself to active political partisanship.

Mr. RINFRET: Last year \$10,000 was spent to install a calculating machine in the statistical branch. In ordinary circumstances that would have brought about a reduction in the staff of the branch, or at least it would have stabilised the staff. Yet, according to the minister's statement there is an increase of four in that branch. Perhaps he will explain this.

Mr. RYCKMAN: It would be fair to anticipate that a labour saving machine such as this would result in less clerical work. The work of the department, as I have been informed, has increased considerably within the last year. That is true of the first half of the year as well of the latter part, and that is the only answer I can make to my hon. friend.

Item agreed to.

To provide for expenses of maintenance of revenue cruisers and for preventive service, and amount required to create positions and make appointments of officers for the prevention of smuggling and to investigate reported frauds against the revenue; also to provide for the expenses of such officers, and for the purchase or charter of vessels and for the purchase or hire of automobiles to be used in the prevention of smuggling or other offences against the revenue laws, \$1,958,991.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): How many of these cruisers are located on the Pacific coast?

Mr. RYCKMAN: There are the Despatcher and the Emperor at Vancouver.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Are the reports in regard to the stoppage of illicit smuggling satisfactory as far as the department is concerned?

Mr. RYCKMAN: I will say frankly, they are not. Owing to efforts which have been made, we have succeeded recently in overtaking some of these illicit shipments, but I am not satisfied by any means that the best that we can do in overtaking this illicit trade has been accomplished. My department is endeavouring to justify its existence in British Columbia by the stoppage of this trade.

Mr. HANBURY: There is an area in Vancouver called False creek which cannot be policed at all with the present force. Unques-