

items, that the dependents' allowance board item is the expenses of operating the board, and that the dependents' supplementary grants fund item is the money expended by that board. Is that correct?

Mr. RALSTON: The last item represents the estimate of the money to be paid out plus cost of administration of the dependents' board of trustees. In the item covering the dependents' allowance board it is cost of administration only.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Will the minister give the committee a break-down in regard to the dependents' board of trustees? How much money has been spent by the dependents' board of trustees in each province or by military districts, whichever way the minister has it, the number of cases handled in each province or military district, and how was this money, spent for the dependents' board of trustees last year, divided as between administration and the amount spent in giving some benefit to the dependents of the men in the services? I should be glad to have that information.

Mr. RALSTON: First, with regard to the matter of participation in elections, I can only say that I will discuss that with my colleagues, the Minister of National Defence for Air (Mr. Power) and the Minister of National Defence for Naval Service (Mr. Macdonald). I will take up with them the points the hon. member has brought up with regard to procedure, and if clarification can be given, or further details furnished, we shall be glad to give the information, because we are endeavouring to make the order in council effective and useful.

The hon. member suggested that we should face up now to what will be before us when these applications come in. He knows there is one thing to which we cannot face up, and that is the exigencies of the service. They will depend upon conditions at the time which we cannot foresee. I believe, however, that what the hon. member is asking is that as far as possible the exigencies be determined by someone who really knows what they are, instead of being left to the discretion of some junior officer to be dealt with.

In reference to the regulation about which he spoke, with respect to writing articles, that regulation has been repealed and the provisions of King's Regulations and Orders, which already exist, have been substituted. The objectionable words in that regulation with regard to prohibited articles were, "on military subjects or otherwise". Those words "or otherwise", are repealed.

Mr. ADAMSON: There is still a ban on writing military articles.

Mr. RALSTON: The ban is contained in King's Regulations and Orders and nothing more.

As regards the proportions of A. and T. staff, I am almost prepared to offer my hon. friend a reward for information which he can give me as to anyone in training centres who says that they are overstaffed, because that is what this committee, about which I have spoken so often, is checking. It is travelling across Canada to find these cases and it cannot get anyone to give evidence to that effect. The members of the committee have to dig the evidence out for themselves.

I thought I had information with regard to the exact proportion of A. and T. staff, but I may be able to give it before the committee rises. There are training centres where there is a low population at the moment, and any of these training centres may be closed and the A. and T. staff reduced or the training centre amalgamated with some other centre. Hon. members will understand that the lower the capacity of the training centre, the higher the percentage of the A. and T. staff. It is necessary, for example, to have one commanding officer, one chief instructor, and one quartermaster. I can only say what I have said time and again, that literally ruthless steps are being taken to cut down staffs wherever possible.

My hon. friend complained of the idea of cutting off a certain percentage. I agree, generally speaking, with that view, but sometimes you have to do that in order to bring home to those who are administering a particular establishment the fact that a reduction is required. What is much more desirable, of course, is to do it in a much more logical and business like way, and that is to have a committee go on the ground and find out what each man is doing and endeavour to cut the cloth according to the necessities of the particular case.

Mr. ADAMSON: That is the Whitelaw committee.

Mr. RALSTON: Yes, In reference to the dependents' board of trustees, I have a long table here which I think is probably the most informative that I could file. The columns show expenditure from January 1, 1942, to November 31, 1943, and regional dependents committees, with locations. The different committees are given at their different locations, beginning with Charlottetown and ending with Victoria. There are twenty-one different committees shown. Administration expenses are shown and single grants are given, divided