

Supply—Finance

in detail when the main item comes up in my estimates or if the question of superannuation is before the house at some other time. But I may say quite frankly that I had not come prepared today to go into that detail. Broadly speaking, I can give my hon. friend the general statement that only in a few cases was the conclusion reached that these employees were entitled to the five-year basis as against the ten-year basis.

Mr. Brooks: There is no intention then to make any amendments to the act?

Mr. Abbott: To cover them—no. The conclusion I reached, after studying the report I was given, was that they were in no different position from that of a great many other civil servants who are still subject to the ten-year average.

Mr. Macdonnell: I have a copy of the minister's letter and I am glad it can be discussed again because it does seem to me that these men are being made the victims of what I think is a more technical view than I would usually expect the minister to take. I take it we can discuss the matter later.

Mr. Abbott: I would be happy to do that. This has come up before. It came up ten or fifteen years ago. A ruling was made then and it has been adhered to ever since. I agree with my friend that it is a complicated situation, and in some cases there may be some apparent inequities. I shall be glad to discuss it when I am a little better supplied with my basic material than I am at the moment.

Mr. Knowles: I hope that the minister will also be supplied with basic material and a little more kindness of heart toward the question of the retired civil servants who are on low pensions when we reach the corresponding item again later in the session. I will not take the time of the committee now because we had a discussion of this matter on March 2. However, I do want to tell the minister that his statement on that day, which was interpreted by some as an attempt on the minister's part to close the door on this question, has certainly not satisfied those who are interested. When I refer to those who are interested I have in mind not only the superannuated civil servants themselves, particularly those in the lower brackets, but a great many others who are interested in them and feel that their case has not yet been accorded the justice it deserves. I appreciate the fact that the minister probably has not had a change of heart in the short time since the 2nd of March, but I hope that before the end of this session he will

have that change of heart and will take a different attitude towards this problem.

Mr. Macdonnell: When the warm weather comes.

Mr. Knowles: It is a serious problem affecting a great many, and it seems to me that the good name of the government is at stake in its attitude towards its former employees. I hope the minister will be prepared to discuss this matter in a different vein the next time it is raised in the house.

Item agreed to.

564. To authorize and provide for adjustment payments in respect of subsidies previously paid and administrative expenses incurred by: (a) Commodity Prices Stabilization Corporation Ltd., and (b) the Minister of Finance on behalf of Her Majesty, pursuant to the agreement entered into between the said corporation and Her Majesty on the 25th day of June, 1953, under the authority of order in council P.C. 1953-868 dated the 1st day of June, 1953, \$310,000.

Mr. Macdonnell: Will the minister give a word of explanation about item 564? What I should like to have is a word about the history of the corporation since the war. The last report of the corporation I have been able to get is that of 1946.

Mr. Abbott: The Commodity Prices Stabilization Corporation, as my hon. friend will recall, was one of the agencies set up by the government in connection with the price control program to administer subsidies and the like. Since the end of the war it has been on a liquidating basis. It has simply been kept in existence in order to pay off outstanding claims. In June of last year an order in council was passed stating that the C.P.S.C. had fulfilled its purpose and it was directed to surrender its charter. All assets were to be transferred to Her Majesty and provision was made for the discharge of outstanding liabilities. The Minister of Finance was authorized accordingly to execute an agreement with the company which provided—I will not go into all the details—for the payment over of moneys to the crown and the crown was to dispose of these moneys first by paying all outstanding liabilities, second, by paying any claim that might be made by Joy Oil Limited, which was the largest claim outstanding and which was under litigation, and third, by paying the government the balance of advances to the company.

Mr. Macdonnell: Is it practically cleaned up?

Mr. Abbott: It is practically cleaned up. I think this will perhaps be as close to the final clean-up as possible. The Joy Oil claim has now been settled. There are sundry