

Mr. BRADETTE: Last fall when the statement was made in this house that the government contemplated building the trans-Canada airways, and landing fields in connection therewith in the different sections of the country, involving the employment of many single men in several parts of Canada, the news was well received in my section of the country. I was pleased to learn from the minister only a few weeks ago that a considerable amount of work had been done in northern Ontario. We knew that it would be necessary from a geographical standpoint to establish landing fields in the northern section of northern Ontario, for reasons which I shall not now enumerate. To some extent, however, we are disappointed that in the districts of Cochrane and Hearst, at which points I believe the government had planned to establish landing fields, no work has been started. In fairness to the minister may I say I realize that the task of expropriating or buying the land and attending to all matters concerning the landing fields entails a good deal of work. I urge upon him, however, that at this time of the year and later in the spring many of our rural single population are out of employment until the ground is uncovered, and if it were possible for his department to begin work in our section of the country conditions would be relieved. This may appear to be a purely local matter, but when we consider that in nearly every section of Canada people are working on these airways, the committee must realize that my request is practical and logical. I know the minister well enough to realize that he will give fair consideration to my suggestion.

Mr. SPENCER: Could the minister give some reason for this decrease?

Mr. SUTHERLAND: The decrease of \$150,000 is distributed throughout the vote. The chief items are, first, that we are making no provision for new aircraft; second, there will be a lesser amount of flying, thereby necessitating fewer major overhauls; and third, there will be very little new work done at the Trenton aerodrome.

Mr. BRADETTE: Would the minister kindly answer my question?

Mr. SUTHERLAND: Yes. As the hon. member has said, the scheme of opening up landing fields to complete the Trans-Canada Airway was recently embarked upon. One very important link in that airway runs through northern Ontario where difficulties have been experienced in landing the machines

flying from eastern to western Canada. During the summer months, on account of the many lakes in northern Ontario, landing is not difficult, and in the summer season flying boats are used. To obviate the difficulty of landing in all seasons, for several years the department have had plans in preparation for the establishment of intermediate landing fields in that part of the country. Under this scheme when we had the opportunity of doing some work we decided to establish the intermediate aerodromes at Diver, Gillies, Nagogami, Pagwa, Nakina, Camp Creek, Armstrong, Sioux Lookout, and Amesdale in that section. At present we have work going on at Amesdale, Armstrong, Nakina and Gillies. Nagogami and Pagwa are apparently close to Cochrane, and work will be started at those points. As the hon. member has said, it is impossible to get the whole scheme in operation at once. However the preparatory work is being done, and before long we hope to get the work under way in the intermediate fields nearer to Cochrane. In that event doubtless the single, homeless, unemployed men from Cochrane will be employed.

Mr. NEILL: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister will be courteous enough to answer a question concerning a matter which does not refer strictly to this item. I notice we have gone into estimates to-night, in defiance of the usual custom of announcing the night before what will be considered on the following day. Last night we were told we would go on with the debate; estimates were not mentioned.

The matter I have in mind was taken up with the minister by letter a few days ago, and the substance of it is this: I am told that an official ruling has been given by the Department of Justice that where a soldier dies having due to him military pay for services while overseas or pay and allowance while sick in hospital, such moneys are not recoverable from the government. The language used is, "such pay being nothing capable of being regarded or secured as an asset of the estate." If this is correct—it seems almost silly to suggest that it is correct, but there is every reason to believe that it is—it is so patently unjust that it certainly ought to be a subject of legislation. I am told the theory is that there is no contractual obligation, and that payment to a soldier is entirely a matter of grace by the government. I think such a theory has only to be stated to show its absurdity, and, if a fact under the law, indicates the necessity of a change in the law. I should like to ask