

Supply—Consumer and Corporate Affairs

that report and have submitted it to practising lawyers in the profession who came to Ottawa after taking the oath and who received only a per diem allowance for their travelling expenses. We have also submitted this report to a group of professional chartered accountants, some of whom were nominated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants and some of whom I chose from my own personal professional experience.

That adds up to a total amount of \$489,753. Less the amount transferred from salaries, the total is \$399,753. As I said, only \$175,000 is requested for the establishment of a consumers branch in the new department which was authorized last December by parliament.

Under vote 5c relating to the Bankruptcy Act the amount of \$109,000 is for the setting up of three regional offices and an investigation squad in order to meet the responsibilities as I interpret them of combating fraudulent bankruptcies in this country, which I termed rather facetiously as being one of the growth industries of this country. I think we have now turned the tide in respect of the type of enforcement we are achieving.

We have managed to work out an agreement with some of the provinces, beginning with the province of Quebec, for the use of federal crown prosecutors in respect of offences under the Bankruptcy Act and provincial crown attorneys under the Criminal Code relating to bankruptcy matters. I believe that the centralization of this type of enforcement, aided by regional offices in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, teams of accountants and the bankruptcy squad now established in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, has made the investigation and co-ordination of case work, presentation of evidence and prosecution itself far more effective. On an earlier occasion in answer to a question posed by the hon. member for Yukon I gave these statistics. Here again I think we have an investment which the Canadian people would wish made in order to protect the business community of this country, particularly those small creditors who are usually hurt whenever a bankruptcy occurs.

Sub vote 25 of vote 20 in the amount of \$80,000 relating to the patent division is to cover the cost of the mid-cyclical review for the professional category which was granted in January, 1967 but not paid until April or May of 1968. No funds were requested from the Treasury Board at that time. This was in response to an earlier request and since the money was not withdrawn it is brought back, I understand, into these estimates.

[Mr. Turner.]

• (5:00 p.m.)

The hon. member for Wellington South made some inquiries about some of these expenses and asked whether the entire amount of \$683,753 was spent on the consumer branch. I have answered that question by informing the committee that \$175,000 is the amount allocated to the branch. The hon. member also asked me about staff and I have already indicated to the committee that there are 26 positions of which about 18 have been filled. The hon. member also asked whether there were two deputy ministers or one. There is one deputy minister over one department. He asked whether the department intended to centralize the entire administration of consumer affairs throughout the federal government. Let me answer now by saying no, we intend to co-ordinate the consumer program in accordance with the legislation. If, after a review of management of consumer programs of the federal government, we should find that some matters would be better handled in a central way the government can then make the administrative changes. We have set up an interdepartmental committee of deputy ministers, under the chairmanship of my deputy minister to look into the various consumer programs from this point of view.

I was also asked about the consumer advisory council. I am almost in a position to publish the terms of reference and once I am able to present my nominees to my colleagues and get approval I will make an announcement regarding the membership of that council.

I should like to make some comment in response to the original remarks of the hon. member for Halifax and the remarks today by the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond concerning National Hockey League franchises. When in Vancouver and in answer to a question asked in the house I outlined the contents of my telegram to Mr. Campbell. Let me state once again that as the courts interpret the act I have no jurisdiction over services. The jurisdiction and authority of the director of investigation and research under the Combines Investigation Act are limited to goods. Professional sport falls under the service item. I do not want in any way to anticipate the current study undertaken by the Economic Council of Canada which, by virtue of a reference made by this government on July 22, 1966, is reviewing the Combines Investigation Act, but I should like to say that since services amount to about 35 per