

Mr. GREEN: In subsection 1 you find powers having to do only with export and import trade; nothing there goes any farther than that. Then subsection 2 provides:

The generality of subsection one of this section is not restricted by any provision of this act other than section four thereof.

That throws you back to section 4, which sets out the purposes. What is the objection to putting in a few words, at the end of either section 4 or section 5, making it perfectly clear that the corporation has the power it is now sought to give it? Then the legislation would be clear.

Mr. McMASTER: I should like one of the ministers to tell the committee who does the buying for the Minister of National Defence at the present time.

Mr. CLAXTON: The Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Mr. McMASTER: Under what power; and what is the extent of that power?

Mr. CLAXTON: Under the order in council the Minister of Trade and Commerce just read, under the Transfer of Duties Act.

Mr. McMASTER: Is that the only way they can get that power?

Mr. CLAXTON: Yes.

Mr. FRASER: When the Minister of National Defence was speaking he said they had under way a very large project in connection with the construction of houses for married men in the service. Will the cost of that project be charged to the defence department?

Mr. CLAXTON: Yes.

Mr. FRASER: Or will it be absorbed by the Department of Public Works?

Mr. CLAXTON: No; defence department.

Mr. FRASER: Then those costs will appear in the estimates of the defence department, and will come before parliament?

Mr. CLAXTON: Certainly. Every defence expenditure will be included in the defence estimates and will come before parliament. Every expenditure made through the Canadian Commercial Corporation in behalf of the defence department will come before parliament in the estimates of my department.

Mr. FRASER: That was not the case when the buying was done by the minister of supply; the estimates remained in that department.

Mr. CLAXTON: There is this difference, which I think my hon. friend will have in [Mr. Abbott.]

mind, that at that time the war expenditures were not included in the estimates but were covered by a war appropriation bill.

Mr. FRASER: Then I should like to ask where these houses are being built; are they at the different barracks across the country?

Mr. CLAXTON: I am afraid that is not a question which arises in connection with this bill. I shall be very glad to deal with it later.

Mr. FRASER: It does to this extent, that we want to find out whether these buildings are being put up by tender, or on a cost-plus basis, or how it is being done.

Mr. CLAXTON: The purpose of this bill is to enable the Canadian Commercial Corporation to do something which is now being done by the Minister of Trade and Commerce; it is not to vote money for the construction of houses. However I can tell my hon. friend that a great many different projects are under way in the three branches of the armed forces, designed to add to the number of quarters for married personnel. The need of married quarters is probably the greatest single need of the armed forces today. Over the last two years we have been doing a great deal of work, which falls into three categories. The first is the conversion of existing hutments into emergency dwelling units, and that is going on from end to end of the country wherever possible. The second is the conversion of existing buildings into temporary apartments, which cost a great deal more money and last a good deal longer. The third is the construction of new dwellings. The only place that is being done at the present time, as I remember it, is at Borden, where it is being done by the army itself, not by contract. But we have in course of preparation a considerable number of projects calling for new construction, and just as soon as those are processed a little further we shall ask the Canadian Commercial Corporation to obtain tenders from contractors for the construction of those houses. If they can get contractors to send in tenders on suitable terms, then the contracts will be entered into by the Minister of Trade and Commerce acting for the crown. The money will be provided out of the estimates of the Department of National Defence. The work of inspection, and the like, will be arranged for between the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Department of National Defence.

Mr. FRASER: The minister said this was not the place to ask it; but this is the only