

After Recess

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Wartime prices and trade board—administration, \$14,300,000.

Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Finance): Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a few words about this item.

Mr. STIRLING: Is the minister going to give a schedule of the items which he will deal with, as the other ministers have done?

Mr. ILSLEY: I can do that readily. I have nothing printed for distribution, but in *Hansard* of March 3, at page 922, there appears a break-down of the finance items. They are very short. I have been out of the house so much that I was not aware of the practice, of which I am now advised, that ministers have been having items mimeographed and circulated.

Mr. STIRLING: Since the minister proposes to follow that schedule, that will do to work on.

Mr. ILSLEY: That is what I propose to do.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Could we have it by to-morrow afternoon?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes. There are only four items in the wartime prices and trade board estimates: administration, \$14,300,000; commodity prices stabilization corporation, subsidies due to application of order placing a ceiling over all prices, \$120,000,000; Wartime Salvage, Limited, administration and losses, \$1,000,000; and Canadian wool board, administration, \$500,000. Virtually there are only four parts to any discussion that will take place: first, the administration of the board itself; second, the commodity prices stabilization corporation; third, Wartime Salvage, Limited; and fourth, the Canadian wool board, administration. Those are the only items. In addition to those items, there are other finance items: comptroller of the treasury, \$7,950,000, and sundries, \$102,000. What I think the committee would like to have would be a comparable statement for the fiscal year 1942-43. I believe other ministers have put similar statements on *Hansard* and, if it would be more convenient for me to have prepared a mimeographed statement showing these items and circulating them among the members to-morrow afternoon, I will do that.

The items are so few, however, and the division so simple that I do not think anyone would be hampered much to-night in discussing the matter.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): We shall have to do the best we can to-night, but may I suggest that with respect to the second and third items, the wartime prices and trade board, \$14,300,000, and the commodity prices stabilization corporation, \$120,000,000, we ought to have a substantial amount of detail as to the proposed expenditures, with a comparable statement for last year. With respect to the commodity prices stabilization item, we ought to have the amounts for the various commodities; and may I venture to ask for the amounts paid to various organizations. I suppose that latter point raises a question of some difficulty for the minister. I understood the minister refused to give that information some time ago. Perhaps my memory is defective, but I believe he refused to name the firms in relation to these subsidies. Is that correct?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes. The position I took in that speech in the spring of 1942—April—was that I did not think I could give currently the subsidies that were being paid to particular firms or individuals or companies, but that later these would be given in the form of a report, and as a matter of fact they have been given for the fiscal year which ended March 31, 1942, in the report which has been tabled in the house. The question came up again more recently, earlier in this session, and by that time the number of recipients of subsidies had become so great that it would be nearly impossible physically to give the names of all of those. It certainly could not be done without months and months of work and at very great expense, so that I left open the question as to what should be done about giving the names of recipients of subsidies for the fiscal year that has just closed. I want to make a general statement on the wartime prices and trade board first, and if the hon. member does not mind he can return to this question.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Could we not settle the principle on which we are to get the break-down so that we can understand it before the minister goes on with his general statement? I hold the view that with respect to expenditures already made in the past fiscal year the country is entitled to know who got the money, just as in the case of any other government expenditure, and I do not think it will do for the minister to say that it involves months and months of work. In the