

Supply—National Defence

Royal Canadian Navy—

217. Operation and maintenance, \$192,550,000.

on this expropriation, because I am aware that the exchequer court still exists even while the present government is in power. When the government appraiser does not satisfy the owner the only thing to do is go to the Exchequer Court of Canada and get an appraisal that is binding on the two parties unless the judgment of the court is appealed. I know, for instance, that one piece of land has been expropriated for the very same purpose near the land we have been talking about. This land belonged to an efficient farmer and was cultivated, whereas the other piece of land is almost sterile and of no use because for the biggest part of the year it is flooded and for the balance of the year it is only a place to put cows or sheep. If you had a good horse or a good cow you would not send it there, because there is a mixture of animals and people can only send poor horses or cows there. However, I am told that during the last year nobody wanted to send any cattle there so the land is almost negligible in value as far as the soil is concerned.

I see that we have paid \$400,000 for 4,000 acres, which means a price of \$100 per acre, yet in the case of 20 other sales in the same area involving good land with barns, sheds and everything else needed for farming, the average price is much below \$75 per acre for good, cultivated land. How is it that the new government has paid \$100 per acre for a piece of land that is of no use at all for farming? I should like to know if the previous government was as generous as the present one in expropriating such lands.

Mr. Pearkes: I will be very pleased to take up this matter with the Minister of Transport. I appreciate the hon. member's interest, and as the funds come out of the Department of National Defence I am naturally anxious to see that there has been no unnecessary expenditure of money. As soon as I can get in touch with the Minister of Transport I will endeavour to get the information for the hon. member, and I will see that he is fully informed on the matter.

Mr. Denis: Possibly we could suspend this item until we get the information. I have asked only a few questions, but there are many others I should like to ask the minister regarding this item. I know he will be glad to give the information to us.

Mr. Pearkes: I am prepared to let it stand for the time being and I will get the information.

The Deputy Chairman: Is the committee agreeable to letting item 216 stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Item stands.

Mr. Winch: I should like to say a few words on this item. By way of introduction may I point out that if my information is correct, and I think it is, the only time a shell ever landed on Canadian territory in the last two wars was in British Columbia, when the present Minister of National Defence was G.O.C. of the western command. At that time a Japanese submarine fired at a lighthouse on the British Columbia coast. The shot missed the target, but it did land on the British Columbia coast. I am certain that the then G.O.C. will recall that the only shot ever to land on Canadian soil was from a Japanese submarine which missed its target. I want to mention that because I think it is a most interesting little anecdote and perhaps not too well known.

That leads me to the subject of submarines. In recent days we have read in the newspapers two reports of submarines off the Atlantic coast and also of a submarine off the British Columbia coast. I cannot and will not ask what occurred, but I do know that our maritime defence force in British Columbia went into action to find out if there was a submarine off our coast and why.

This leads me to what I want to say more particularly by way of complementing what I said yesterday. I believe all of us would like to hear more from the minister about the department's policy as to the development of defensive measures against the possibility of missile attack from a submarine source. My knowledge is limited, though I hope it is fairly good, and I believe the minister and his predecessors have been working toward the development of methods to meet what must be considered a major problem, an attack on the Atlantic or Pacific coast of Canada by submarines of an aggressive nation using the missile.

The minister informed us both yesterday and today that there are now two detachments. This means that all ships of the St. Laurent class are now on the British Columbia coast and that all ships of the Restigouche class are on the Atlantic coast. I should like to ask the minister if all ships of the St. Laurent class which he says are now on the British Columbia coast, and those of the Restigouche class which are now on the Atlantic coast, are completely equipped as submarine hunters. If so, are they completely equipped with the most modern equipment, not only to search for submarines but also to counteract a missile when discharged or to possibly alter the course of a missile after it leaves the submarine?