

Supply—Finance

560. To provide for a gift of food as a contribution to flood relief for Japan, \$50,000.

Mr. Macdonnell: Is that the total amount of our gift or is that supplemental to a larger one?

Mr. Abbott: No. That is the total amount.

Mr. Macdonnell: It does not seem to be a very magnificent gift. What was the total amount?

Mr. Abbott: I do not know that either. This was the recommendation. This was a voluntary fund. It was not a government fund.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

General administration—

561. Departmental administration—further amount required, \$5,800.

Mr. Noseworthy: I take it that this is a fairly general item, the administration of the Department of Finance, and I hope the matter I want to bring to the minister's attention is in order. First of all, I want to point out that the Department of Finance, through the Bank of Canada, is interested in our banking system and, through the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act, is interested in gold mining. The matter I want to call to his attention is a report in this morning's *Globe and Mail* to the effect that when the strike at the Hollinger mine was settled there was an agreement to compromise on the question of the check-off to the extent that there was to be what was known as a bank check-off. Hollinger was to send cheques to the bank. The bank was to agree that any employee who so desired might have his union dues deducted and paid directly to the union by the bank. In this morning's *Globe and Mail* there is a report to the effect that while that practice was in effect before the strike, it has been discontinued since the strike ended and that none of the eight district banks have so far been induced to participate in that compromise agreement. I wonder whether the minister wants to comment on that matter, seeing it affects his department?

Mr. Abbott: I have not any information about it, but it has nothing to do with the administration of the Department of Finance. It is purely a matter of internal management of the banks, as far as I can see.

Item agreed to.

562. Comptroller of the treasury—central office and branch offices administration—further amount required, \$220,000.

Mr. Macdonnell: One can quite understand that, in item 561, there might be a small

[Mr. Abbott.]

amount like \$5,800 required for further administration expenses, but I find it a little bit difficult to understand why the comptroller of the treasury should find that he needs a further \$220,000.

Mr. Abbott: I can relieve my hon. friend's mind at once. It is entirely owing to raises in salaries, revision of salaries; and it covers only part of it. That is the complete answer. There was a little bit left in the vote, but the revision of the salaries requires this whole \$220,000 and more besides.

Mr. Macdonnell: The only thing I can suggest is that if that fact had been stated, the minister would have been saved my question.

Mr. Abbott: Perhaps I might help a bit here. A good many of these items scattered through the estimates are due almost entirely to the upward revision in the salary rates.

Item agreed to.

Administration of various acts and costs of special functions—

563. Superannuation and retirement acts, administration—further amount required, \$132,404.

Mr. Green: I should like to ask the minister what decision was reached with regard to the civil servants who had been in the old department of soldiers' civil re-establishment. As the minister will recall, there was quite a lengthy discussion last session, some of us contending that these particular officials were not receiving adequate consideration with regard to their superannuation. The minister promised to have each individual case looked into. I now find that in at least two of the cases I raised from Vancouver there have been adverse decisions, although the persons had been in the service for over thirty years. Will the minister tell us on what basis the department is acting in connection with these cases?

Mr. Abbott: From memory I am not able to do so today. As I promised when this main item was under discussion last year, the superannuation branch has made an investigation of each individual case of these employees who are affected and has made a report to me. As a result of that investigation the conclusion was reached that the contention of the vast majority of these employees that they were entitled to the five-year average and not the ten-year average—which is what it boils down to—for superannuation purposes, was not justified and could not be granted.

I have prepared a memorandum, which I have sent to a number of members who are interested in the question, outlining the particulars of the investigation which was made. I will come prepared to discuss it fully and