

*National Defence*

to point his finger at defence estimates and suggest in detail where savings could be made. They are groping in the dark, as it were. I shall just give an illustration of a few cases that have come to my attention in travelling in this country and in meeting various people and servicemen. I noticed that the United States congress committee was concerned about the abuse of batmen. They had quite an investigation into that question. They also considered unnecessary expenses caused by wives of commissioned ranks who wanted certain extra accommodation, and so on, and they were concerned about waste in some construction projects. I find, Mr. Speaker, that we have in some cases a similar situation in Canada. I want to bring a few things to the minister's attention.

I was travelling on a train recently and sitting in a smoking coach. I always like to travel incognito, you know. I got chatting with four or five soldiers in the coach who were going on leave. I always like to find out how the boys like the service, how they are being treated. They all liked it very well. These were five batmen. So I said: "What do you boys do?" These men had been in the army nearly two years. They informed me that with the exception of the first few days of their entering the army they had never attended a parade. They were all the well-fed looking type, quite jolly chaps, you know. I would not say they were intellectuals, or anything of that sort; quite happy with their jobs, and content. I said: "What are your duties?" Well, their duties were to care for their officers' clothing and polish their boots and also to polish the floors in the officers' wives' homes and to run the washing machine. One man told me that he looked after the baby's nappies on occasion. I thought that was a bit off so far as national defence expenditures are concerned.

So far as I could see, the whole time of these five men was devoted to looking after the officers to whom they were attached or to the houses of the officers' wives in question.

These men came from Petawawa. One was batman to a colonel. I can give the minister some information privately if he wants it. Multiply that thousands of times across this country, and what unnecessary expenditure may be going on in this connection, expenditure that could be avoided! Possibly one batman would do for two officers. Why should not these men be taking training? I understood that in the army every man was supposed to be competent in the arm of the service in which he was engaged. I would like to draw that to the minister's attention.

[Mr. Herridge.]

When he speaks I would like him to tell this house what are the terms in the service with regard to employment of batmen and whether they are expected to act as house boys for officers' wives.

I had another chat with another group of men. Not so long ago I was having a drink of Coca-Cola with a group of men who were discussing their service in the reserve army. They were interested in playing basketball in the winter and football in the summer. I asked them how often they played, and they told me. And do you know what I discovered? I discovered that those men had joined the reserve army on the understanding that they would not have to wear a uniform, and that the only parade they would be required to attend would be the pay parade. That is what they told me. I understand it is correct.

We see professional sports entering the reserve army. Why is it necessary to ask us to give special facilities to men to join so that they may play professional sports, and with the necessity only to attend pay parade? I would ask the minister to look into that, and I shall give him the information privately. Is that a necessary expenditure in connection with our defence?

Then, I would ask him to look into the lavish gardens being developed, and furniture that is being purchased in Ottawa by his department. One of the staff down there told me that they had very good and expensive blinds removed, and replaced by Venetian blinds because the gentleman in question did not like the way the sun shone in through the windows when curtained with ordinary blinds. May I inquire again why very fine lawns have been disturbed and gardens rearranged, and gardening done around certain buildings connected with national defence when those buildings were already in creditable surroundings?

I suggest these points to the minister. They are only incidental and small things that have come to my attention while talking to people. But it is possible that these smaller things indicate greater waste. I do hope the minister will look into these matters, and make reference to them when he speaks at the conclusion of the debate.

I would ask the minister to tell the house what checks he has on the present improper use of army personnel, the improper use of army vehicles and the improper expense connected with the purchase of articles such as I have suggested. If I were minister of national defence, and I am not likely to be, I would have two slogans posted in every officers' mess. I would have one bearing the words *We Are Responsible for the Security of Canada*. And, so that those men would be