

Supply—National Research Council

Mr. Knowles: The minister says that there is a similar item in the main estimates but—

Mr. Abbott: Let us not have a discussion on it in the absence of the Prime Minister.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Pensions and other benefits—

589. To authorize in respect of members of the Royal Canadian Air Force on leave without pay and serving as instructors with civilian training organizations operating under the British commonwealth air training plan who were killed, payment to their dependents of amounts equal to the amounts such dependents would have received under the Pension Act, as amended, had such service as instructors been military service in the armed forces of Canada, less the value of any benefits received by such dependents under insurance contracts which were effected on the lives of such members of the Royal Canadian Air Force by or at the expense of the civilian organizations—further amount required, \$1,224.

Mr. Abbott: Perhaps I might give a word of explanation about this item. When we amend the scale of pensions under the Pension Act there is one group of Canadian airmen who were on loan to the civilian operated schools who do not qualify for pensions under the act and we have to introduce a supplementary item to bring their pensions up to the same scale. Next year an appropriate provision will be made in the main estimates.

Mr. Pearkes: Could you not amend the Pension Act?

Mr. Abbott: I have wondered about that.
Item agreed to.

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL AND ATOMIC ENERGY CONTROL BOARD

National research council—

590. Construction or acquisition of buildings, works, land and new equipment—further amount required, \$725,450.

Mr. Green: Could we have an explanation of this item?

Mr. Abbott: When the main estimates for 1952-53 were being prepared, a very careful review was made of the estimated requirements for the various construction projects. After due consideration of the nature of this project and comparison with expenditures made in previous years on other construction projects it did not appear that expenditures on this project would exceed \$1,300,000 for this fiscal year.

The progress made on this project throughout the year has been outstanding. Progress payments for the first seven months of this fiscal year amounted to \$1,199,984. Although the monthly progress payments for the

[Mr. Abbott.]

remainder of the fiscal year will be on a lower scale, it is quite evident that the amount provided in the main estimates will not be sufficient to meet requirements for this project. A number of transfers of anticipated savings were made between allotments in this vote to provide funds to continue the progress payments. Finally it was found necessary to request authorization to make temporary loans from other projects where liquidation of encumbrances were not anticipated until near the end of the fiscal year, in order to avoid work stoppage on this project.

Mr. Green: What project is this?

Mr. Abbott: There are various projects for the electrical engineering and radio building of the national research council at the large project out on the Montreal road. The progress of work has been much more rapid than was expected when we prepared the estimates a little over a year ago.

Item agreed to.

Atomic energy control board—

Atomic energy project (now Atomic Energy of Canada Limited)—

591. Operation and maintenance—further amount required, \$310,000.

Mr. Green: Could I have a brief explanation of this and the following item?

Mr. Abbott: The main item here is the additional cost involved in connection with the accident. You know the difficulty with the one pile at Chalk River. This is the additional expense which will be incurred in this year in connection with repairs to that first pile.

Mr. Brooks: What is the total amount?

Mr. Abbott: We are asking for an extra \$310,000. The original vote was \$7,089,371.

Mr. Brooks: I understand that the cost of repairs is small, approximately half a million dollars.

Mr. Abbott: That may be. I think the work is well advanced and we are asking for an extra \$310,000. It has been possible to make some transfers from other allotments.

Mr. Brooks: It is much less than was expected.

Mr. Abbott: So I understand.

Item agreed to.

The Chairman: We shall now revert to item 576, governor general and lieutenant governors, \$50,000.