

Supply—Secretary of State

law, because the law can be complicated and not applicable to all individual cases.

If our civil servants were allowed to decide by themselves in several of the cases submitted to them, this would eliminate the bureaucratic character, if I might say so, ascribed to them.

[Text]

Mr. Barnett: I have one or two questions concerning the operation of the commission. I notice the estimates provide for an increase of some \$488,000 as compared with last year. As far as I can see, the largest single item in this connection represents an increase in wages and salaries paid to people in the employ of the commission. I notice, also, there has been no significant change in the total number of positions authorized in the establishment of the commission. However, it appears there has been a change in the composition of the commission's staff—a decrease in the number of clerical staff and an increase in certain categories of senior administrative and professional personnel. Could the minister explain to the committee the significance of these changes? What direction are we moving in which would result in a need for a change in the composition of this commission as compared with previous years?

Mr. Lamontagne: I understand there was a significant increase in salaries in effect for part of the year and, in addition, a number of reclassifications which I presume were being made as the commission is redefining its role and getting prepared for certain new arrangements which will be made as a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Glassco commission. The language school is included in these estimates and it constitutes a net addition to the expenditure and to the staff.

Mr. Barnett: In other words the increase is partly attributable to the development of the language school and partly to the appointment and higher salaries of professional personnel.

I see there has been a relatively substantial increase in the provision for travelling and removal expenses. I do not know whether any special significance attaches to this. Further on in the details of expenditures there is an indication of an increase of \$100,000 in the amount provided for advertising for recruiting purposes. The amount has risen from \$250,000 to \$350,000, which is an increase of almost half as much again.

Can the minister tell us the reason for this large increase?

Mr. Lamontagne: This was due, I presume, to the increase in recruiting activity which took place at the end of the austerity program. In particular it was needed to meet the demands of the new Department of Industry.

Item agreed to.

Privy council

Economic Council of Canada—

35. Administration \$817,920.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall this item carry?

Mr. Lamontagne: I made a report on the economic council last week and we had some discussion about it. The item was not approved, but at this stage, at least, I have nothing to add.

Mr. Lambert: Let us go back and consider what happened last Thursday when this matter was discussed. The minister's estimates were under consideration from eight o'clock to ten o'clock and the committee dealt with four or five items directly under the administration of his department. I can hardly agree with him that an extensive statement was made.

On a previous occasion, when we were discussing interim supply, we did discuss this matter. We asked what the economic council was doing. We did so because the council had been introduced with a great fanfare of trumpets to replace the national development council, but since that time we have not heard a great deal about it. I notice that as reported on page 9811 of *Hansard* the minister made a few remarks in connection with the council but I suggest he may be in a position now to add to what was said on that occasion. With the greatest respect I do not think that the two-hour discussion on Thursday indicates that this is all the consideration which need be given to the activities of the various agencies which come within the jurisdiction of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. Lamontagne: No.

Mr. Lambert: I know he had a few remarks to add this afternoon so perhaps we might have them *en passant*.

Mr. Lamontagne: I have nothing to add to what I said last Thursday about the economic council. All I said at that time was that the economic council had picked up its staff in its first year of existence and that its first objective had been to get into a posi-