

concerned, it was. I am not at all anxious to raise a controversy now; I should be the most pleased of any in the House if some explanation could be given. And even without such an explanation I am not one of those who feel that the minister can keep everything in his mind; I fancy the matter should have been brought to his attention by the officers concerned. I shall welcome gladly any explanation which the minister can give.

I join in the tribute paid to the young man. While not knowing him or his immediate family, I knew the Crawfords and I had heard of the lad and of his ability even prior to the expedition. He was a young man of exceptional attainment and personality and character. No boy of the age of twenty would undertake an enterprise so perilous, so venturesome, so novel, unless he were indeed extraordinary. That he should have been lost while in the midst of that enterprise; that his death should have been of so tragic a character, in the northern wilds alone; and that his parents should have suffered as they have been called upon to suffer, is indeed something to be deeply lamented by the people of Canada. If some fitting measure can be introduced, some fitting plan suggested, to immortalize the act which he performed and to do justice to his memory in the eyes of the Canadian people, and particularly in the eyes of the parents of the boy himself, I am sure that I for one shall be pleased, as every other hon. member of the House undoubtedly will be.

Mr. FORKE: I have read Stefansson's account of the story of Wrangel island and, so far as I can see, I do not think that Mr. Stefansson blames anyone. Nor is anyone particularly to blame in connection with the tragedy of Wrangel island. Probably the trouble arose through the optimism of Mr. Stefansson himself; he believed that it was possible for people to live off the land, as he put it, out in this Arctic region. Apparently he had no fear whatever for the welfare of these young men during the first year. They had a lot of provisions in addition to what they could secure in the way of live animals in the northern waters, and when that first expedition was outfitted from Nome he had considerable trouble in raising sufficient funds to equip the ship. It was perhaps a week or two late in starting, and if I am not mistaken that is admitted. We all know the story of this tragedy; it was impossible for the expedition to get within reach of the island owing to the ice. Captain Bernier was forced to come back. Stefansson claims that during all that following winter he had no fears; he

felt satisfied that the men would be able to live until the next season. We know now that he was wrong, and the conditions were such that undoubtedly they endured a great deal of hardship. There is some question as to whether it was want of food that induced the three men to leave Wrangel island for Siberia, or whether they were in sound health when they undertook the journey. They had attempted previously to make the journey and were driven back; after some weeks, with a lighter outfit and with one dog fewer, they made the attempt again. Unfortunately however, immediately after they had started out, a violent storm came up and they were heard of no more. Probably they were overwhelmed in the storm; possibly in a weakened state they could not stand up against the rigour of the elements. In regard to Knight, who was left on the island with Ada Blackjack, the Eskimo woman, suffering, and who eventually died, the story is tragic enough indeed. I do not want to blame anyone unjustly, but I think the mistake arose from Mr. Stefansson's belief that it was possible for men to live out there two years without outside help. He makes the claim that when people live in the Arctic regions one or two years they acquire a taste for the fatty animals, such as seals, which they catch. That may or may not be true; I do not know. However, the story is a tragic one, a story of great bravery. And while we cannot but lament the end we rejoice at the heroism and the courage of young men of this character who would attempt to endure such hardship for the purpose of bringing so remote an island into the empire. With the concluding remarks of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Meighen) I entirely agree. I think some fitting memorial ought to be erected to this young Canadian, who certainly was a hero in the fullest sense of the word. Perhaps some blame might be attached to Mr. Stefansson for leaving this youth where he would have to endure such severe hardships. I repeat, I heartily endorse the suggestion made by the right hon. Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition.

Item agreed to.

Dominion lands and parks—salaries of the Dominion Lands outside service, \$469,556.

Mr. McQUARRIE: How is the decrease of \$36,824 made up?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I have not got the actual details, but we closed some offices and amalgamated others and were thus