

is an increase of expense in every service which calls for wages. I think the average increase in salaries under reclassification of Civil Service comes to between 25 and 33 per cent.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Guysborough): We are not talking about that; we are talking about repairs, furniture, grounds.

Mr. McCURDY: A staff of 253 men is employed and paid out of this vote in connection with repairs and keeping in order the grounds, snow removal and street maintenance.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Guysborough): What has that to do with the income tax offices?

Mr. McCURDY: The cost of fitting up the income tax offices also comes out of this vote. It is a sort of general vote which includes all these services—furnishing the offices, keeping up the grounds about the buildings, making repairs, alterations, and so on.

Mr. CHISHOLM: I thought the income tax offices were in the East block.

Mr. McCURDY: They outgrew those premises, and are now located in the Daly building.

Mr. CHISHOLM: Do we rent more buildings now than we did eight years ago?

Mr. McCURDY: Very many more.

Mr. CHISHOLM: It is an extraordinary thing that after putting up two such large buildings as the Hunter building and the Customs building, we still have to rent more buildings. I had hoped that when these buildings were erected, we would not be renting so many buildings, but evidently this condition is going to stay with us.

Mr. McCURDY: Reducing the office accommodation that you require after the war is something like the cost of living; it is hard to get it down. My hon. friend was present in the House to-day during the discussion over larger pensions, and he will recall that the Pensions Committee recommended that because of the cost of living, the bonus attached to pensions should not be reduced at the present time. Although the war is over and different staffs are being demobilized, up to the present time we have been able to get clear of only a comparatively small number of buildings. We are vacating at the present time a building on Rideau street, rented for \$45,000, also the Bate building on Slater street, with a rental of \$16,000, as well as some whole

floors in other buildings throughout the city. My hon. friend knows enough about government operation to know that it is difficult to cut down in that regard. He is familiar with conditions in the province of Nova Scotia. Conditions have not changed there very much, yet the Provincial Government are constantly buying additional buildings. For what purpose? For the increased needs of the service, although the total volume of business in the province is not much greater. That is the tendency all the time, and it is one that those administering a department have constantly to combat. I am hopeful that in the coming year we shall be able to make progress along the line of getting clear of some of the buildings which we took over during the latter part of the war, and which are not now so crowded as they were during the war.

Mr. McKENZIE: After the Hunter building and the Customs building were occupied, did we cease to rent any buildings?

Mr. McCURDY: I was not administering the department at that time, so personally, I cannot say what happened, but I understand from my officials that there was such a pressure all round for office space that when these buildings were ready for occupation, the influx from overcrowded departments was such as to fill these buildings in almost no time. I do not think the Hunter building would have been built when it was except for the urgent demand for office space.

Item agreed to.

Rideau Hall—Allowance for fuel and light, \$17,000.

Mr. DENIS: It seems to take quite a lot of fuel to heat Rideau Hall.

Mr. McCURDY: The vote is the same as last year in spite of the fact that the cost of fuel has gone up, so I think my hon. friend will agree that we are getting off very cheaply this year.

Item agreed to.

Telephone service, \$90,000.

Mr. DENIS: Is the Government satisfied with the telephone service we are now getting in Ottawa?

Mr. McCURDY: Frankly, I am not, but I expect by the time this committee assembles next year we shall have an improved telephone service. A new system is being installed by the Bell Telephone Company