

strength in Washington of, I believe, fourteen. In other words, of a staff of 226 in Washington, sixty-nine were officers getting special rates of pay and having special income tax allowances. Yet the minister comes to the house and says he cannot save money.

In my opinion these figures are ridiculous. There should be a saving, because it is absurd that there should be that military establishment of this size in Washington to-day. I cannot see why there should be one officer in the navy for every four enlisted men, and in the entire force of the army one officer for every five men. I am reliably informed that even if they get 25,000 men for the interim force they will still have a surplus of 1,300 officers recruited for that force. Surely there can be economy here. I know that in the old days, if a district officer commanding wished to spend more than \$250, he had to go to the treasury board to get approval. Is the minister's department not checking up on this colossal overstaffing? That is one thing that could be done to save the people's money. There is, in my mind, no question about that.

Some days ago an atomic bomb was dropped in the Pacific. One would have thought the department would have sent as an observer one of their bright young officers, one who is going to be in the service in the days to come. Whom did they send? They sent Major-General Luton, who had been director of medical services and is now retired. They sent this retired officer to check up and report on the dropping of the atomic bomb. I say that that job should have been given to a young soldier, somebody who is going to be in the service for years.

If the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Abbott) wishes to do a job for this country he can clean out his department and do away with this colossal overhead for which the people of Canada have to pay. The Minister of Finance has some idea of what it costs to maintain an officer in the army, especially when there are so many higher ranking officers around. I venture to say that the members of this house have seen more major-generals and brigadiers at the Chateau and at various functions in the last few months than during the war. If the minister is serious in trying to keep down expenses—and I am sure he is—there must be some way in which he and his departmental officials can check this overstaffing of the force, because undoubtedly they are overstaffed; it is known to everybody. If you take the train to Toronto for the weekend you will find that it is still full of service personnel. I know the department will say that they are going to release from the services something like 20,000 men this month, but I

venture to say that there will not be a corresponding drop in the number of officers dropped from the roll. Unfortunately, so far as the services are concerned too many officers are making jobs and trying to maintain them not only for to-day but for the future.

I wish to say a few words about the steel strike which has been called for Monday in spite of the fact that the government has placed a controller in charge. The minister announced an increase in the exemption for married men and single men which is to come into effect some time in the distant future. I suggest that many of our labour troubles to-day are brought about by the fact that the men want to keep their "take-home pay" with which we all agree. Would it not be wise for the minister to bring these exemptions into effect as from the first of this month? Perhaps it would prevent a lot of labour trouble in this country, and a great deal of our difficulties might be eliminated. I suggest that the minister give consideration to this suggestion. If that were done, the workers in the country would have a greater "take-home pay." We know it would cost money; but, after all, money means nothing if you have a contented people. The amount lost would come back in many ways. Again I suggest to the minister that he give consideration to bringing these exemptions into force as from July 1 of this year. There is no reason why this should not be done.

I now come to the Department of National Health and Welfare. I find it difficult to get true and honest statements from the government on governmental expenditures. Some time ago I asked a question with regard to the expenses of administering family allowances. The figure I received was that for the first six months of operation the total cost was \$783,141.43. It was obvious to me that that figure was incorrect. I also asked the question as to how many men were employed administering the act. The reply that came to me was that on December 31 there were 417 temporary employees and thirty-five permanent. In a court case in Toronto on April 17, Mr. Jackson, manager of the Toronto office of family allowances, made the statement that he had 300 permanent employees in Toronto and 100 temporary employees. It was therefore obvious to me that my question was not answered correctly. There was nothing in the statement for postage. On looking through the estimates of the Department of National Health and Welfare, one can see that the department pays postage on everything. If one takes the number of cheques that go out—and they were sending out 1,378,128—according to my reckoning the postage would be approximately