

*War Appropriation*

I am wasting time to-night. But I certainly must tell the minister something his staff does not know. I must point out where our trans-Canada highway and our railways can be put out of action by one box of powder by the most dastardly enemy we have to-day, and no alternate route is being provided.

I am very much interested in the free transportation of soldiers. I am interested in this fact, as a supporter of the government, that in so far as I see the matter they have not as yet made any attempt to explain why we can pay a cost of living bonus to some of the higher paid civil servants, and cannot pay it to a mother with four children whose husband is at war. That has never yet been justified by the government, so far as I am aware.

There is another point I should like to make, as an old soldier—probably not a very good one, but nevertheless a soldier. I think I do know something about this, because I know the necessity for discipline. I would strongly urge upon the minister, not so much in his branch of national defence, but in another branch whose expenditures will come before us in a few days, that it is not conducive to discipline to have a bunch of fine young men continuously compelled by the law, as laid down in the King's Rules Regulations and Orders to salute a bunch of senior officers who have never been out of Canada, who never will go out of Canada, who are still pushing pens and always will be pushing pens. If the soldiers in this day and age knew how to adjust it as we did in the last war, they would adjust it in exactly the same way as we privates and non-commissioned officers did. We just ignored them, and would not salute them at all. I want to tell the minister and his staff that no good front-line officer, such as I served with, wants to be saluted. He is not parading around Ottawa at some cease-fire job.

But I am not interested in that point as much as in the other one. I am more interested in coast defence, in a fact which cannot be contradicted by anyone, namely that to-day it is possible for the Japanese to put both trans-Canada railways and the trans-Canada highway out of action with one handful of powder. Apparently no effort is being made by the staff to cover that; and apparently no effort is being made to provide an alternative route either into or out of the Pacific coast, in the event of attack, when that route could be provided for a very small sum of money.

Mr. RALSTON: First with regard to dependents' allowances and transportation, I think we had a lengthy discussion of these matters, and I have noted all that has

[Mr. Cruickshank.]

been said. I would say again, however, in connection with dependents' allowances that whether or not my hon. friend and the committee are satisfied with it, my colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) in November announced a policy which was intended to cover that very situation. There was provision for a board of trustees whereby emergent, special cases and cases of need of any kind would be looked after. He announced, I believe, that it was far better, instead of making uniform upplings of all allowances, to provide for cases where need arose.

I have not before me to-night figures as to dependents' allowances paid in other places. But I do assure my hon. friend and the committee that our allowances are substantially above any others. I am not saying that they should not be higher still, but I do think that the matter has not been overlooked at all, in respect of the possible necessity for increases, on account of increased cost of living. I have, however, taken the matter under consideration and, as I promised the committee the other day, every attention will be given to it.

With respect to the other point mentioned by my hon. friend, I know the Department of National Defence covers a great many activities. But I do say to my hon. friend that the Department of National Defence does not cover, and does not take on as its responsibility, the evacuation of Japanese from British Columbia, or the guarding of the roads. That is simply impossible. The Department of National Defence is endeavouring to conduct and to prepare for military operations, and to defend against enemy armed forces. What my hon. friend is referring to is civil defence in Canada. Of course I will take note immediately of what he has said because, indirectly, it does affect defence. My hon. friend will understand that we have across Canada in many, many places points which are vulnerable, as has already been indicated. But they are not guarded, and cannot be successfully guarded by soldiers. It would not be a proper thing to do to use up our armed forces for that purpose. Those are police jobs, which are under civilian authorities, and should be controlled by them.

If my hon. friend had read an article some time ago written by J. Edgar Hoover of the federal bureau of investigation in the United States, he would have seen described the best delimitation one possibly could find of the duties of military and civilian authorities in connection with this matter of sabotage, and enemy action of that kind. It was there indicated that the federal bureau of investigation—not the secretary of state for war—undertook those tasks. They were undertaken