

Mr. McDONALD (*Hamilton South*): In every case?

Mr. SIM: Yes. This is the cheapest and most informal way of challenging a departmental ruling. We endeavour, so far as possible, in advising the government in respect of legislation, always to provide safeguards against any sort of bureaucratic decision that is not open to appeal.

Personally, may I say that I welcome being able to say at a certain stage of the discussion, "This is my opinion; this is what I think of it. If this does not suit you, you are at liberty to appeal". The tariff board has been so constituted that it is a fairly informal and relatively cheap way of challenging a ruling of the department. Also, there is the Exchequer Court.

Mr. BENEDICKSON: The deputy minister has emphasized cheapness and informality. How expeditious is it? How quickly does a person get a decision?

Mr. SIM: Far be it from me to make any remarks about this appeal board, for which I have the greatest veneration. However, I will say that, in relation to their opposite numbers in the United States, they do a marvellous job of expediting decisions. You will notice from the figures that I gave earlier that there are only about 80 or 90 cases before them at the moment. This compares with, if I remember correctly, the last figure for the United States, thousands of cases that are awaiting determination. In a general way I think you will find that our tariff board have been giving decisions expeditiously.

Mr. BENEDICKSON: In appraising and reselling merchandise, it is not of much value to have an appeal if one does not have any idea of what his costs are in selling the merchandise.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): I notice one other item where there is a reduction from \$140,000 to \$125,000. This is under the heading of law and other costs. I hope the department is not being unfair to the legal profession.

The CHAIRMAN: I hardly think that question requires an answer.

Mr. BROOME: I think that item ought to be cut in half.

Mr. MORRIS: Before we close the discussion on the item I would like to ask the deputy minister whether, in connection with outports, of which there are 150 in the department, the customs and excise enforcement officer continues to be the ships' reporting officer. If so, I would like to know whether that information finds its way to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Mr. SIM: As far as the ships reporting officers are concerned, I think it is only in certain places where the navy have asked for this particular service from us. It is not a general responsibility that we have. I think the navy determines that they would like the service from us at various points, and they have so designated, as I recall it, a fair number of our ports.

The CHAIRMAN: I might mention one thing, and that is, gentlemen, that we will not close item 254. With your approval, we will leave it open as a "catch-all" so that you can come back to any general items, if you wish.

Mr. PETERS: Mr. Chairman, is this the place where we should discuss customs officers?

The CHAIRMAN: I think that will come under the third item, Mr. Peters.

Mr. CLANCY: With regard to goods coming into customs on consignment, what is this brokerage charge? Is that compulsory?

Mr. SIM: No. It is a profession known as licensed customs house brokers. Anyone is free to employ the services of these people, or not, as he wishes. Many people find it convenient to employ them because they are fairly familiar with the requirements of the law. There is no compulsion.

Mr. CLANCY: Does a firm shipping from the United States employ a broker?

Mr. SIM: I beg your pardon?