

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

**The Chairman:** May I remind hon. members that we have had a general discussion on the first item, departmental administration. At that time the general economic conditions and outlook were discussed. I would not want to have another general discussion on this item merely because it calls for the payment of salaries to a director of a division, five or six economists, stenographers and typists. The hon. member for Lethbridge opened this discussion and said he had his doubts as to whether it was in order. He asked the minister for certain information which the minister gave. He also informed the committee that part of the information had been given during the afternoon. The member for Acadia and several other members took part in a discussion which has certainly gone much further afield.

I listened to the remarks made by the member for Frontenac-Addington, and I thank him for having said that if he was out of order he would accept the advice the chairman gave. Unfortunately he was not here this afternoon when the general discussion took place, and I thought that if no objections were taken to his remarks he should be allowed to carry on.

Hon. members of the committee should realize that if we are to make successful progress we should not initiate a general discussion on every item which seems to give some scope. This item has to do with payments of salaries to the director of economic research, economists and others. If hon. members will look at it they will find it reads:

Economics division, including conducting of investigations and reporting upon current economic conditions and outlook.

In his opening remarks the minister gave the current economic conditions and outlook. Someone observed that his remarks were optimistic in regard to the picture, and others said other things. Therefore this question was fully discussed. On an item dealing with salaries of those in the department, and of those making reports, are we going to open up the whole matter of trade and commerce throughout the world? I do not think so.

**Mr. Coldwell:** Mr. Chairman, I asked the minister a question. I see that most of the money spent in this economics division is for salaries, or the bulk of it. Looking over these salaries I find that for the type of work done and the qualifications that are usually demanded they are not high. I think that, like a good many salaries in the government service, they are much below the average paid by industry for the same type of service. Where are these economists located? Are all of them in Ottawa, or are some of them attached to various offices overseas? If

[Mr. Aylesworth.]

they are located in Ottawa, what type of work are they doing? Are they writing publications for the department, or making investigations into trends and so on? If they are overseas what are they doing?

**Mr. Howe:** I agree that the salaries are low for men of the training that these men have. As a matter of fact, we lose them to industry all too quickly. A unit survey has been made recently and salaries are being brought more into line with the laws of supply and demand in the field. The raises are not great. In senior positions the government cannot hope to pay the salaries that private industry will pay for the same service. These men are located in Ottawa. They are located in departmental buildings. Their main function is to obtain fundamental data from the bureau of statistics and interpret them into a form that is useful for government departments. It is a service branch for several government departments. It is used by finance and several other departments of government. I think they are extraordinarily good. I think the heads of the three branches are just about as good economists as you will find anywhere in Canada, or anywhere on the continent—at least their forecasting seems to me to be amazingly accurate, and I cannot speak highly enough of the service they give the government.

**Mr. Coldwell:** None of them is overseas?

**Mr. Howe:** No; all in Ottawa.

**Mr. Charlton:** During the minister's answer to the hon. member for Lethbridge he again made the statement that we exported more goods in volume to Great Britain in 1951 than we had in any previous year. I would now ask the minister, in view of what he said about my statement this afternoon and about my figures, just what products he had in mind. Give us the name of the products that we exported more of to Great Britain last year than ever before. I mean more in volume.

**Mr. Howe:** It is hard to draw those figures out of the hat. I need to get notice, but I will give the hon. member a few. One would be nickel, another would be copper, another would be zinc and another would be lead. These I am sure of. Another would be aluminum. I could perhaps give the hon. member some more by looking them up, but I will give these without any hesitation. Probably another would be lumber.

**Mr. Charlton:** I was referring particularly to agricultural products. This afternoon I said that, owing to war conditions and defence conditions in England, there were many goods that we had exported more of, but they were