

for a certain period, for a certain reason it was none too successful, and I do not think there is any reason to suppose it would be more successful in this country. As it is we are none too well supplied with planes, and I should not like to see the time of these planes taken up for mail flying purposes. When we reach the next item, it will be interesting indeed for the minister, as he probably will, to give the committee figures with regard to the amount of flying that is done now. A considerable number of commercial companies are ready and only too willing to fly if they can get the work to do. Contracts are being taken by them, and, particularly with regard to the north country, they are there ready to do the work, so that a very great service could be rendered to Canada as a flying nation by encouraging the work of these aviation companies, because of the use that, under certain eventualities, we can make of the men and the planes.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Of course my hon. friend will agree that the question whether air mail contracts are to be carried out by this service or by others will be a matter to be decided by the Post Office Department and the government generally, rather than a matter for the Department of National Defence.

Item agreed to.

Civil aviation—expenses in connection with the control of civil aviation, airways, government and public airports and grants to aeroplane clubs, \$1,262,800.

Mr. STIRLING: Would the minister elaborate a little on this item? I remember that some weeks ago, in reply to the hon. member for Vancouver South, the minister stated his expectation that a trans-Canada route would be in operation this year. I wonder whether he would elaborate that statement.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Yes. In this vote will be found an increase, under airways and airports, amounting to \$532,722 and a decrease, in other items, amounting to \$21,286, making a net increase of \$511,436. With this amount it is intended, during the present year, to complete, practically, the Canadian airways route from Winnipeg to Vancouver. That means the restoration of the facilities in five airports which were more or less closed down in 1932 and the completion of thirteen new airports, making eighteen in all, between Winnipeg and Vancouver. The estimated cost of completing the Canadian airways route between Winnipeg and Halifax is \$2,314,500, of which amount over \$1,000,000 would be required for the construction of new airways

and airports. So, by the end of the current year it is hoped that we shall have a modernly conditioned and equipped airway between Winnipeg and Vancouver, and it is reasonable to expect that the other portions will be proceeded with in due course.

Mr. STIRLING: Of the five plus thirteen airports to which my hon. friend refers, will they all have directional beacons?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Yes, all of them, it is understood.

Mr. STIRLING: Ready for night flying?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Yes.

Mr. MacNEIL: This is one appropriation which, in my opinion should be increased, and I am sadly disappointed that more generous provision should be made for the military branch, and in my judgment at the expense of the civil aviation branch. I am particularly interested in the encouragement that is being given by the department to the flying clubs across Canada, as to whether they are being given proper opportunities to develop technical skill in aviation. It seems to me that the departmental policies at the present time are open to criticism, because they consider in too great a degree obsolete military traditions and do not give sufficient consideration to matters that will be of primary importance should we become involved in war. If, as the minister states, it is the wish of the people that we should have adequate defence for Canada in the event of war I suggest that public money should be voted and administered in such a way as to provide adequate defence. If we consider the requirements of modern warfare I think we may safely say that the first essential is young men of the physical stamina required in time of war and properly trained physically, and undoubtedly the second consideration under present conditions would be adequate technical training.

In neither of these respects does the department assume any definite responsibility. Viewing the matter solely as a problem of defence I feel that we are far behind other countries in the consideration of these questions. During recent years, even during the years of the depression, I feel that ample provision has been made to permit of suitable steps being taken in these matters. I directed an inquiry to the ministry, in reply to which a return was tabled by the Minister of National Defence, and in which I asked what purchases of aircraft had been made during the period from October 23, 1935, to the date of the inquiry; if such purchases had been made; what types were secured, and if tenders were called for in all instances. I notice that under