

matter, which are frequently paid when the enterprise cannot qualify under the Cold Storage Act. Perhaps it was started before the plans were approved.

Item agreed to.

Marketing Service—

651. Fruit, vegetable and maple products and honey—further amount required, \$50,000.

Mr. MacNICOL: I am not rising to oppose this item, which is fairly substantial, but can the minister give the house any idea why such an amount was required for temporary services?

Mr. ILSLEY: The item for temporary assistance amounts to \$35,000. The explanation for that item is as follows. A carry-over of \$6,837.51 of 1944-45 salaries paid out of the 1946-47 appropriation; unusually heavy shipments of potatoes from the maritimes and Quebec from April to June, 1945, necessitating the retention of inspectors in this area for longer than usual periods; pear psylla investigations in British Columbia; the establishment of a maturity inspection service on all fruits entering British Columbia shipping warehouses, and the return of a number of inspectors from military service, all resulted in the amount provided for temporary salaries proving insufficient.

Item agreed to.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

652. Passport office—administration—further amount required, \$10,000.

Mr. FULTON: I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question in connection with this item. I recall that I asked him a question last session, when I first came down, and it is still unanswered. I hope the right hon. gentleman may find this one a little less controversial. It has to do with the granting of permits for travel to the United Kingdom. I think all hon. members are in receipt of numerous inquiries from people as to why they cannot be allowed to go there. Can the right hon. gentleman tell us whether there is any possibility of relaxation shortly in the restrictions on travel to the United Kingdom, or what is the present position?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: As my hon. friend doubtless knows, the question is largely one of transportation and of priorities in regard to certain classes that are necessarily given first consideration. From day to day the restrictions are being somewhat relaxed, but it has not been possible to remove them all thus far.

Mr. MacNICOL: Before the item carries I do not think it is out of place to say a word

by way of compliment to the passport office for the way it carried on during very trying times in the last few years. I doubt if any other office in the public service was so crushed with overwork as was the passport office. I had a great many contacts with that office, and always experienced the utmost civility. While sometimes I may have thought they were a little slow, when I would go down and see the enormous amount of work they had to do I knew I was being impatient in making an effort to rush them. I want to congratulate the Prime Minister on the way this particular branch of his department carried on during very trying times.

Mr. FRASER: I understand that during past years the salaries paid to those employed in the passport office have been about as poor as those in any department of the government, if not poorer. Employees in the passport office are trained until they become efficient, and when they reach that stage they find jobs in some other departments, and obtain transfers. These changes of personnel in the passport office have made matters extremely difficult for those in charge. Is there any possibility of offering them some incentive to stay in the passport office.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There have been times when the passport office has been heavily pressed, and also times when other branches of the government service have been even more pressed to obtain the necessary assistance to carry on the work during the war. There was a time when matters eased up to some extent, so far as passports were concerned, with the result that some transfers were made from the passport office to other branches of the public service.

I agree with my hon. friend that salaries which have been paid for certain classes of work in the public service, and particularly in the passport office, have not been—well, to say the least, anything out of the way. However, the whole question of salaries is one that will have to be gone into more completely than has thus far been possible. This is being done at the present time by the government. It is related to the whole matter of the regulation of wages, during the period of the war, and in the present transition period. I believe the reason some salaries have not been changed lies in the relationship between salaries in the civil service and salaries in industry. However, the whole matter will come up for further review, now that the period of the war is over.

Mr. FRASER: Just one further point about the passport office. It certainly is a dismal looking place. One goes up those back stairs