

Supply—Labour—Unemployment Relief

Mr. ROGERS: I have not that information available at the moment. I shall be glad to secure it and send it to my hon. friend.

Item agreed to.

Special—To provide, in cooperation with the provinces, for rehabilitation of unemployed persons, \$500,000.

Mr. GREEN: This is something new. Apparently it is carrying out one of the recommendations of the Purvis commission. What type of rehabilitation is to be carried on?

Mr. ROGERS: We are following the same course here that we did with the youth training projects. That is to say, we are asking the provinces to submit training projects for older unemployed men, which will be most likely to bring about their reestablishment in the particular province. We are asking the provinces to submit these projects to us for study and approval before they are adopted.

Mr. GREEN: Have no projects been submitted yet?

Mr. ROGERS: Yes, from one province there have been. But the hon. member will understand that the vote itself has not been passed. Letters have gone out to all the provinces asking them to submit proposals.

Item agreed to.

Amount required to provide for administration expenses generally, including salaries and travelling expenses; unemployment relief branch, \$211,500; national registration, \$110,000.

Mr. BENNETT: This would seem to be the appropriate place for me to say that since we last had under discussion the conditions of unemployment I have seen the Hon. Wesley Gordon, former minister of labour, and he informs me that the copy of a letter attached to a public file and marked "personal" from Ralph Webb was not to the best of his belief and knowledge on the file when he left the office. Secondly, I have looked in my own personal files, and I find no trace of any such document being received from Mr. Webb. But I assume it did come to the office. He was advised, I notice, that the Hon. Mr. Murphy, then Minister of the Interior, would go to Manitoba and investigate the whole situation there, that he did so, that the very persons who were discussing the matter in this house were publicly in favour of the work being done, and that after conferences with the provincial government the Minister of the Interior did so advise, and that action was taken.

Further, Mr. Gordon informs me that the reason it was determined that no further work should be carried on after the date of the elec-

[Mr. Massey.]

tion was that the time for the writs had expired, and as the now Prime Minister had been criticizing the action of the government in entering into contracts, contracts entered into after that date contained the provision that no further commitments should be made after the election, and that they could then be the subject matter of further consideration.

Lastly, it is wholly in violation of all the rules that govern that a personal and private letter marked "personal and confidential" should be submitted to parliament; for the privilege is not the privilege of the receiver but that of the sender. When Hon. Vincent Massey wrote a letter to Hon. Arthur Meighen marked "personal," even after he had gone into the government, and Mr. Meighen asked him to release the privilege, he declined to do so. It was recognized in all quarters that that was the privilege of the sender or the writer of a letter, and not of the receiver or addressee. Upon that we have acted continuously, including shall I say the case in which Mr. Abramsky says he had a personal letter from the minister. Whether he has or not I cannot say. But the privilege is the privilege of the minister, and not of the receiver of the letter. I say this in view of the definite knowledge I have, and which can be further supported when occasion necessitates.

Mr. ROGERS: I should add first of all that the letter to which my right hon. friend has referred was on the file. I was not aware that it was on the file until the file was requested. But there is no question whatsoever as to the letter having been on the file.

Mr. BENNETT: When was it put there?

Mr. ROGERS: I assume it was there from the beginning; I have no reason to assume otherwise.

Mr. BENNETT: I have, and so has Mr. Gordon.

Mr. ROGERS: As to the question with respect to the termination of the work, as I recall it that was not a point at issue. The particular agreement to which the right hon. gentleman refers called for the beginning of the work—

Mr. BENNETT: No; that the work should not proceed beyond October 10.

Mr. ROGERS: It was required that the work should begin as of a certain date.

Mr. BENNETT: October 10.

Mr. ROGERS: Yes, October 10. That had occurred on rare occasions before, but not to my knowledge during the last three years—certainly not under any agreement.