

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

then wanted to go west. He has been with us on our farm for approximately twelve months and I can say that he has been very satisfactory. He was accustomed to farming in England, and I think he is going to make a real good citizen of Canada.

Mr. Fair: Mr. Chairman, my name is not included in the list just referred to by the hon. member for The Battlefords, but I may say that I arrived in the real home of the Barr colonists, the town of Lloydminster, on January 10, 1914. At that time it was a rather small town, but today it is one of the most progressive in Alberta or in Canada. There is a group of businessmen there who have been building up their businesses, and at the present time the town has a population of considerably more than 4,000. I think what they have done is a credit to these people.

I only wish time would permit the hon. member who has just taken his seat to relate some of the experiences of the men and women who came here in 1903. It would be well worth while, because none of them were experienced farmers. They were businessmen who had been engaged in different lines of business in the old country, and they have certainly made a contribution to the welfare of Canada. Around Lloydminster they have cleared thousands of acres of land and are growing millions of bushels of grain. Now we also have oil developments there. The Canadian National is being supplied with oil for its diesels, and oil is also being supplied for many other purposes including the production of roofing and road-building materials.

I did not want to let this moment go by without adding my words to those of the hon. member for The Battlefords. It is really amazing to see the progress that has been made there in a short time.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Mr. Fulton: Before it carries, I wonder if the minister would now care to make a reply to the general statements, and then we could get on with the questioning on the detailed items.

Mr. Harris: If we might carry the general item, I could then speak first on the first item of immigration.

Item agreed to.

Citizenship—

58. Citizenship registration branch, \$195,964.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, this is the first item dealing with citizenship and there are a number of questions.

[Mr. Bater]

Mr. Harris: I will make a statement on citizenship; or do you want to go ahead?

Mr. Fulton: I should be glad if the minister would make a statement.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Chairman, I would like to take a few moments to speak about citizenship, and I shall do my best to make it very short.

In presenting the estimates of the citizenship registration branch of the department for consideration of hon. members, I am glad to report that all signs point to a growing awareness of the value and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. As hon. members know, this branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration is responsible for administration of the Canadian Citizenship Act with the exception of those two sections which provide for citizenship training and naturalization court proceedings. The branch is also the custodian of all records under the act and is the agency which issues all certificates of citizenship.

Considering the very great increase in immigration to Canada since the end of world war II we would naturally expect a substantial increase in the number of applications for Canadian citizenship. This, of course, has not yet occurred because of the fact that an immigrant must be a resident in Canada for five years before he can apply for citizenship.

Declarations of intention which precede the actual application for citizenship are, however, showing an encouraging increase. In 1952 these totalled 13,323, exceeding by some 4,000 the total filed in each of the previous five years. I anticipate that this trend will become more noticeable, for in recent months the number of declarations of intention filed with the department has shown a substantial increase each month over an average of any of the months since the citizenship act came into force. I would suggest that this increasing interest is an indication that the program of training in citizenship which has been in operation since 1947 is beginning to show results.

I would draw particularly to the attention of hon. members the interest in citizenship shown in recent months by various veterans organizations across Canada. Not only are these organizations taking the lead in helping to create a greater awareness of Canadian citizenship but the members are also, as individuals, applying in increasing numbers for their certificates of proof of Canadian citizenship which are available to ex-service men and women without charge. I have had the very great pleasure during the past year