

ment, I do not know. To my mind, this proposed expenditure of \$30,000 is waste money. No doubt the expenditure has been made annually for years back, but it has been emphasized in the House that this is a time to call a halt in unnecessary expenditures. Here is an opportunity to save \$30,000 on a single item, and I would ask the minister to consider a reduction of his estimates to that extent at least, and the cessation of the topographical surveys for a few years.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): If the mover of the amendment is agreeable, I am willing to cut the whole estimate by \$30,000, but I would not like to apply the reduction to any specific vote.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Although I may frankly say that I am not altogether satisfied with the minister's explanation, I feel that he is not responsible for the present conditions. I think we can be assured of the minister's good intentions and that next year will witness a substantial reduction in this vote. I would therefore be quite willing to accept his suggestion that the amendment be withdrawn, and another amendment substituted providing for a reduction of \$30,000. I would, however, offer one suggestion to the minister in connection with the Mackenzie, Peace river, and all the other oil schemes: If a few men are to go out into any of these districts and plot out some oil leases, or whatever they call them, and then it becomes necessary to send out a survey party to map them out, these men should pay the expenses of the survey instead of the department.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): So far as regards making the lessees pay for the surveys the department have fairly stringent regulations with respect to the payment of royalties on the product when it is found. If an individual goes in and spends thousands of dollars on development work, as many of them do, whereas the Government has spent no money on such work but charges a fee for the lease and imposes a stiff tax on the product when found—with which I am heartily in accord—I think we will all agree that this particular industry is being taxed fairly heavily. While I am in thorough agreement with that policy, I do think that in the initial stages we should render all the assistance we can for investigational and development work, and, when the product is found, take a fair share for the State out of the production.

[Mr. Guthrie.]

Mr. MEIGHEN: How much of the \$600,000 was actually spent last year?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I am informed it was all spent last year but I cannot vouch for the statement.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I would not think myself it was very far out. I am sorry that the enthusiasm of my hon. friend from Bow River (Mr. Garland) for retrenchment was so short lived. I do not know what the transformation is that has taken place since six o'clock but I have still some enthusiasm of my own left. Now the expenditure on surveys some three years ago necessarily increased. [Why?] It had ranged around \$400,000 and \$500,000 per year. It increased because of the necessities of the soldier settlement survey. Large amounts were required to take care of surveys that were demanded by reason of the soldier settlement extension work that took place in the year 1919-20, particularly in the year 1919. Last year \$100,000 was deducted. It would be because that work was contracted; and going over the estimates with Dr. Deville we arranged for the gathering together of certain surveys under one head and we were able to reduce by \$100,000. Now in every respect of policy that counts, every policy that is vital, the Government have paid us the flattery of imitating us exactly save only in the process of retrenching on expenditure. In that they do not seem to be able to follow the good example that we set. Last year \$100,000 was taken off in that process. Why can we not do it this year? I have not the least doubt that the contraction of soldiers' settlement work is much more this year than it was last. Furthermore, I cannot remember in detail but there was certain work that we had to do in conjunction with provincial governments—I think the governments of Ontario and Manitoba. We bore, I think, one-third of the cost of some survey work in Manitoba and also some in the province of British Columbia. That work, I think, is over and therefore I know of no reason at all why there should not be this year a reduction of \$100,000. In this connection I feel that I ought to say this: The head of this branch of the work of the Interior Department, Dr. Deville, is not only a man of conspicuous capacity, but he is a man who will co-operate with the minister to the full in securing reduction of expenditure if the minister shows a desire to that end. If there is one officer who is ready to co-operate with him more enthusiastically than another it