

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

of business are increasing, and the work of the bureau of statistics is increasing. In the last several years they have been making valiant efforts to handle these increases without additional staff, simply by improving the efficiency of the bureau. I think they have made a reasonable success. I could read the complete list if required.

The new cost of living index has been under study during the past year and has taken an enormous amount of time. Meetings have been held with almost every organization in Canada interested in the subject. There is always something new to be done. As I say, efforts are being made to keep the staff constant and to handle the work without any increase.

**Mr. Fleming:** Could the minister or his colleague, the Minister of Public Works, tell us what the new bureau of statistics building is going to cost?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** When my estimates are before the committee I shall have all the details as to that building.

**Mr. Blackmore:** Is the statistical summary issued by the Bank of Canada based upon data provided by the dominion bureau of statistics?

**Mr. Howe:** Yes. The basic data for all statistical reports issued in Ottawa are supplied by the bureau of statistics. The actual interpretation is made by economists outside the bureau whose duty it is to interpret information supplied by the bureau.

**Mr. Blackmore:** Regardless of the department concerned?

**Mr. Howe:** Yes.

**Mr. Blackmore:** If it had not meant delaying the committee I would have liked to hear the complete list of the various activities carried on by the bureau. I should like to know to what extent the dominion bureau of statistics is regularly compiling data in order to show the total productive capacity of Canada in connection with almost every commodity.

**Mr. Howe:** I shall be delighted to send across the text of what I was reading from as the hon. member may be the only one interested in the detail.

**Mr. Blackmore:** Perhaps I might tell the minister what might be new to the house and the country. One reason why I am particularly interested in the bureau of statistics is that if it is ever decided to set up a Social Credit state—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Blackmore:**—the first thing we shall want to have is what is called a national account book indicating the actual productive capacity of each industry in the nation.

**An hon. Member:** What will it cost?

**Mr. Blackmore:** That is a sort of question we might expect from anyone so simple as to ask a question like that before he knows just what we are talking about.

**The Chairman:** I must ask the hon. member to address himself to the Chair and not conduct a conversation with hon. members across the floor. I might also ask him to confine his remarks to the dominion bureau of statistics. I do not think we ought to go into the future and consider the setting up of a state which might perhaps be different from the one we have now.

**Mr. Blackmore:** I am just wondering to what extent the bureau of statistics is ready to be utilized for compiling the national account book. The first important thing needed would be complete details of every branch and aspect of the productive capacity of the nation and I am just wondering if the bureau of statistics is in a position to assemble and supply that information.

**Mr. Howe:** The national product indicates the total production of the country. The capacity to produce may be larger but what is actually produced is the gross national product. That is prepared by our department based in part upon information supplied by the dominion bureau of statistics.

**Mr. Blackmore:** There is a rather thorough breakdown of the gross national product with respect to what is actually possible now and what will be possible with certain developments and so forth.

**Mr. Howe:** That is right.

Item agreed to.

454. Statistics, including contribution of \$3,100 to the Inter-American Statistical Institute, \$4,088,614.

**Mr. Charlton:** In the details on page 500 there is an item of \$142,473 for rental of office equipment. Would the minister explain that item?

**Mr. Howe:** These are special business machines. My hon. friend knows that certain business machines are not bought. They are rented and that is the rental of certain equipment that was installed particularly for handling the last census. I may say that much more work was done on special machines in the last census than ever before.

**Mr. Charlton:** If that be the case, would not the item of \$137,176 for 1951-52 have taken care of the last census?