

Manpower and Immigration Council

offices will be in the region to which they are assigned. The headquarters of the grand council and those of the boards will be in Ottawa. The members of the council and those of the commissions will be able to travel according to their needs but, as I told the Leader of the Opposition earlier, only with the proper authorization. Naturally, you cannot allow 25 or 30 committees to travel all over Canada without authorization.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Chairman, I understand and I would accept the explanations given by the minister if he would lay down that condition for the council itself. But, I am somewhat concerned especially when I refer to the provision in the bill whereby the minister may provide not only the council but any board or any regional or local manpower committee established, with professional or other assistance. There I can see the danger of a multiplication of assistants in the public service, because the minister requests the authority to extend those technical advisers, that professional or secretarial assistance, even at the local and regional level, and if the minister would give us the assurance that the expenditure incurred for such professional or technical assistance would not be unreasonable, I might be prepared to accept his explanations, but I see that once again we might have to ramify, extend and project secretariats and agencies which would be a duplication of the work already done and of the responsibilities already assumed by civil servants. If the minister agreed to provide the secretariat's technical and social assistance to the council itself, I would agree, but when he tells us that this situation can occur in all the local committees, at all levels, I feel that the government might incur expenditures which will further increase the present deficit.

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Chairman, obviously, when the terms are rather general, any conclusion can be arrived at, including the one my hon. friend has just drawn. However, there are several barriers, of which the first is the estimates of the department. You will note that \$120,000 are provided for in the budget for the advisory boards, which include all per diems to be paid, all allowances, all travelling expenses, including secretarial expenses. If ever we go beyond that—at the present time there is only an overall limit—but the treasury board has also set a limit—we can then come back to the house for supplementary estimates. If perchance there should be the abuse the member fears, you

[Mr. Marchand.]

will be aware of it and, hackles up, will be ready to criticize us, and rightly so.

Then, in any case, we agree: the idea is to have the authority at any time, whenever a regional committee holds an important meeting, and no secretarial staff is locally available, to hire such staff on a temporary basis to help the committee operate effectively.

Now, I think the house is pretty well able to act at all levels, and if it should happen that abuses are committed, you would spot them so fast that you would have time to correct them before they led to disaster.

Mr. Valade: I apologize if I press the matter, Mr. Chairman and I recognize the merits of the minister's argument. However, the minister did not tell us how the staff for this additional secretariat will be recruited at the local level, not under the national council, but at the local and regional levels.

If the minister reserves himself the authority to appoint the additional staff along with the employees of the public service, and if these appointments come under his direct authority, for this is the essence of this clause, I wonder how the minister can allay the suspicions of political patronage.

Mr. Marchand: I am grateful to the hon. member for wanting to protect me, but I feel that you should give me credit at least for common sense if not for good faith. If a council in Vancouver must hire a stenographer for three days, I will not step in to find out who he or she is and where they got him or her, so long as I am given proof that such a step is necessary.

You might say: Is it not possible that at some time abuses might occur? Might they not choose the wrong secretary? It is quite possible, I cannot give you any guarantee, that is to say I cannot put in the legislation anything that will put your mind at rest because you seem to fear a lot of things, but nothing much can happen.

Moreover, control is automatic. There are in these committees people from every association, responsible people; I think that even though we would like to do certain things allowed by the legislation, our people would not agree.

Therefore, I do not think, Mr. Chairman, that this clause should keep one from sleeping soundly.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact the purpose is not to protect the minister