

The CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed with that, am I to presume that item 255, inspection, investigation and audit services, is carried?

Item 255 agreed to.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DIVISIONS

Item 256 Port-Operation and Maintenance .....\$29,740,118

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): I do not want to leave this tourist matter.

The CHAIRMAN: You are on it now. We are ahead of ourselves.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Has the deputy minister any statistics to indicate the total amount of entries under this item, beyond the continental limits of North America, since it came into effect?

Mr. SIM: This is a pretty recent amendment, and I do not think we have really got any statistics on this yet that would be worthwhile. That is, to distinguish between those who are taking the \$100 exemption and those who are taking advantage of the additional exemption that was provided at the last session. We have no figures as yet which would be useful to the committee.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Such statistics would probably not be available until the full fiscal year of operation?

Mr. SIM: That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions on this item of ports, operation and maintenance, item 256?

Mr. GRAFFTEY: This is a fairly long item. Does the meeting go on until twelve o'clock?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. What is your problem?

Mr. GRAFFTEY: I wanted to ask some questions on it.

The CHAIRMAN: Proceed.

Mr. GRAFFTEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask this question. When competitions for a promotion appear in the department—and I am not talking about a straight, ordinary civil service competition—what weight is given to the local preference rule?

Mr. SIM: None at all, except that in a general way we are always happier if a local man is selected for the job. It causes less disruption, particularly in these days when it is hard to come by a house, and so on. But no weight is given, so far as the competition is concerned.

Mr. GRAFFTEY: I would like to stress to the department at this time that I have had fairly objective representations made to me about this matter. Very often a man works in one of the ports in a small village on the border. He makes a name for himself in the community, supports community endeavours and is generally considered as quite a fellow in the community.

Then suddenly an opening appears at that port, which everybody in the village knows about. I get resolutions from the twon council, et cetera, on his behalf because this competition gives some other preference.

I do not know the solution to the problem, but I would suggest that more weight be given to the local preference rule in these promotion cases.

Mr. SIM: There might be objection from other hon. members who are not fortunate enough to have border ports in their constituencies.

Mr. GRAFFTEY: May I ask another question? Would it be possible for a customs officer in a large city centre—say, Montreal—to be down-graded in his civil service rating in order to accept the position of collector of customs in a port located in a rural area?