

Supply—Labour

Mr. Mitchell: Yes.

Mr. Gillis: They laid down a number of rules and regulations on the international scale?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes.

Mr. Gillis: What I should like to know is where one could get that report. Will it be through the minister's department?

Mr. Mitchell: If my hon. friend wants that report, I will get it if I have it.

Mr. MacInnis: I thought the reports were distributed. I get them.

Item agreed to.

150. To provide for the effective organization and use of agricultural manpower, including recruiting, transporting and placing workers on farms and related industries and assistance to the provinces pursuant to agreements that may be entered into by the Minister of Labour with the provinces and approved by the governor in council—formerly included in demobilization and reconversion, \$360,000.

Mr. Harkness: Can the minister tell us just what agricultural labour is referred to in this item? I notice another item back a little farther, item 156, which apparently is for about \$900,000 to provide for people coming into this country from other countries, placing them on farms and so forth. As I read this labour item, I wondered what this particular item was for. What labour does it refer to?

Mr. Mitchell: I will tell my hon. friend what it is. It is to meet the emergent labour situation in the agricultural economy of the country. My hon. friend probably remembers that, particularly during the war years, we used to send a quarter of a million people from the agricultural structure into base metals and other industries during the winter months and back again into agriculture in the summer. Then there was a movement backwards and forwards across the country from the east to the west to coincide with the harvest season in the respective parts of the country. Then of course you had the berry picking and fruit season in the Niagara peninsula, the Okanagan valley and in other parts of the dominion. The expense is shared jointly between the provincial governments and the federal government.

I do not know whether we shall use it to any great extent this year. I can say this to my hon. friend. I do not know what we would have done without that co-operation between the respective governments in the movement of this kind of labour, particularly during the war years and also since the end of the war. A half million is in connection with the d.p.'s. They are landed at Halifax

and we pay their fares to the employers in agriculture, wherever they are going in the dominion.

Mr. Harkness: That is the later item.

Mr. Cardiff: I should just like to ask the minister if the government intends to carry on the same policy as it has carried on in the past with regard to placing these d.p.'s on farms.

Mr. Mitchell: Yes.

Mr. Cardiff: I think that policy is absolutely wrong. If you are going to bring d.p.'s out here as farm labour, then we want farmers, not people who merely call themselves agriculturists and stay on farms for just as short a time as they possibly can until they can find themselves a job elsewhere. In one year you cannot make a farmer out of a person of that calibre.

In the first place, they had no intention of farming when they came out here. The only reason they went out on the farm was that they could not get out here in any other way. I think the policy is absolutely wrong and the farmers of this country deserve better treatment than that. The farming population have put up with these men, and many of them are good men; I do not want to be misunderstood. But I would say that a number of the d.p.'s are absolutely no good to the farmers. The farmers are compelled to pay them good wages, and they are not worth their board. If the policy could be changed so that these men would stay on the farm for five years, many of them would never come out at all, because they would not stay that long. As long as you allow them to come out here and to stay on a farm for one year, you are going to get this class of immigrants, who are no good to the farmers, and we have to put up with them.

Mr. Mitchell: I just want to say this in defence of the d.p.'s. In a big and broad way I think they compare favourably with the people who live in the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Ferrie: They are doing a good job.

Mr. Mitchell: Let me say this also. If some of our people had gone through what these d.p.'s went through in Europe, they would not feel very happy. I have been to many of these camps in Austria and in Germany and have seen the people that came out of them. Our experience has been this. I shudder to think what would have happened to the beet crop last year if it had not been for the d.p.'s. They have fitted into our way of life in the same way as other people have. In every race, colour and creed you get people who do not fit in. My hon. friend may have been unfortunate. Our experience is