

Supply—Trade and Commerce

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): If my hon. friend will use his influence with his party to amend the British North America Act, we may be able to follow his suggestion. But the constitution requires a quinquennial census.

An hon. Member: Which party?

The Chairman: Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. Monteith: Included in this figure of \$490,000 is an item of \$66,250 for professional and special services. I would ask the minister to outline what type of professional services will be required in this census.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): The item is to provide for payments to census commissioners at \$250 each for organizational work in their census districts, to be included as part of the total amount for services rendered in connection with the 1956 census.

Mr. Monteith: That is \$250 per district.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Yes, per commissioner.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): I agree with the hon. member for Moose Jaw-Lake Centre. I rather think we are indulging in an expensive luxury that is not going to be of any great service. As far as population is concerned, the dominion bureau of statistics has figures and the municipalities also know pretty well what their populations are. I understand that some 75 questions are going to be asked farmers. Farmers seem to loom as a very important segment of the economy when it comes to asking questions at census time, but when 20 per cent of the population only receives 9 per cent of the national income it does not appear that they are very important when it comes to the distribution of wealth. I think this money could be well spent elsewhere. I think this is a waste of the taxpayers' money. In ten years from now we will be having a census every two and a half years. It is the silliest thing I have heard of in a long time.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): May I say that the premiers of every province in Canada, I believe, have requested it. We had a particular request from Premier Frost for the reason that he wished to obtain accurate population figures with respect to the municipalities throughout Ontario. At the time of the 1951 census it was found that population figures for the municipalities throughout Ontario were badly distorted, and it is important to the provincial authorities who pay subsidies on the basis of population for education and other purposes. I might say that we were in some doubt whether we should meet the requests of the provinces and of businessmen to conduct

this census. However, after the matter was debated we decided it should be done. I watched the newspapers carefully to get the public reaction to the announcement. I found a number of editorials commending the government on its decision to take a census, and I did not see a single one critical of the government for making the expenditure.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): It would seem to me that the provincial departments of municipal affairs in the provinces could quite reasonably be expected to provide that information. I do not see why the federal government should collect information for the provincial governments.

Mr. Barnett: Can the minister tell the committee if this census can be used to determine whether the dominion bureau of statistics or the premier of British Columbia is right as to what constitutes the total public debt of the province of British Columbia?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): No, this does not deal with debt figures. It only deals with population and certain farm and fisheries statistics.

Item agreed to.

Board of grain commissioners—

444. Administration, \$136,425.

Mr. Castleden: I should like to ask the minister whether a final decision has been reached with regard to the definition of No. 1 feed screenings. I drew the minister's attention to this matter earlier in the session. Under the definition of the board of grain commissioners heretofore they have allowed a rather wide percentage of wild buckwheat in the samples. I understand some arrangements have been made with shippers whereby the shipment of anything less than 30 per cent of cracked grain in such feed screenings will not be permitted, and also that some time this fall the matter is going to be finally corrected in the board of grain commissioners' definition. What is the situation with regard to that?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I am told that the board of grain commissioners have dealt with the matter. The terminal operators have been instructed that all No. 1 feed screenings shipped ex terminals will contain a minimum of 30 to 35 per cent broken grain, wild oats, etc., and further shipments of No. 1 feed screenings will therefore no longer contain the excessive quantities of wild buckwheat referred to by the hon. member. The board of grain commissioners propose to amend regulation 7 effective August 1 next to regularize the present arrangement.