

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

his visit to Hong Kong. I should like to say that both arising out of the very brief opportunity I had of seeing something of Hong Kong last year when on my way to the parliamentary conference in Kuala Lumpur, and as a result of the many discussions I have had with people of Chinese ancestry throughout the years, I honestly felt that the minister had come to some rather sound conclusions and had made some rather sound observations during his visit to Hong Kong. Personally I wish to express my appreciation of the kind of observation he made about the situation. Having said that I certainly wish to urge that the minister really follow through with some action based upon the information he gathered during that visit.

Other members have dealt with other aspects of the matter of Chinese immigration from Hong Kong. I am not going to repeat their statements or arguments but I should like at this time to draw attention to one particular factor that the minister mentioned, and I quote from his statement as found on page 6822 of *Hansard*:

A serious problem for immigrants in Hong Kong is the necessity to visit various offices for medical tests and examinations. This is tedious, causes long waits and is expensive for the migrants.

I am discussing with my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the establishment of a completely integrated "one stop" medical centre in our immigration office in Hong Kong. This would greatly benefit the immigrants.

Arising out of some of the experiences I have had in attempting to assist people with immigration problems I would say to the minister that this would perhaps be the most immediately useful step that could be taken with respect to bringing about some rationality in the arrangements for handling immigration applications in Hong Kong. I think the the minister was being very modest and discreet when he pointed out that as the process has been operated in the past it has been expensive for the immigrants. While the minister did not spell it out, I am quite prepared to suggest that part of that expense has arisen out of a lot of underhanded dealings that have gone on in respect of people being able to secure the necessary medical clearance. In other words, bribery and corruption have been very much involved in the problem of getting the right kind of medical clearance for our immigration authorities in Hong Kong.

Without going into particular cases I can say I have been told stories that I think would horrify any of us. They involve what has happened to some of the people who have

[Mr. Barnett.]

tried to get the necessary medical clearance in order to come to Canada. I am glad that the minister has taken particular note of this problem and proposes to do something about it. If he does not get the fullest co-operation from his colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare, he can rest assured that he will find support in other quarters of the house.

Finally, before we conclude consideration of the estimates I should like the minister to report on a matter he did not touch on in his opening statement as far as I can recall. I refer to the question of immigration from our sister commonwealth nation, India. Some of us feel that here is one area where there still remain a good many unnecessary restrictions and discriminations. I should like the minister to report to us on his intentions in this connection and tell us what he feels should be done about immigration from that particular part of the world.

Mr. Winch: Mr. Chairman, there is one other facet coming under this estimate upon which I sincerely hope the minister will comment. The hon. member for Timiskaming referred to the policy in the past under which Chinese slave labourers were brought to Canada and which was sometimes referred to as the coolie contract system. We all hope those days are gone forever. However, I believe the minister is in a position to clear up certain allegations and rumours that have come to the attention of some of us. There is a rumour that a group of people in the lower mainland of British Columbia have toyed and are toying with the idea of trying to persuade the minister to allow them to bring in Chinese labour from Hong Kong under some kind of landed immigrant status for the purpose of doing backbreaking work in the lower mainland area of British Columbia. These individuals cannot get anybody in British Columbia to do the work, having regard to the conditions and the wages they are prepared to pay. It is further rumoured that a person or persons who should know better are directly or indirectly aiding and abetting the plan to introduce coolie contract labour into Canada. If this is so, I say it is a disgrace and it is disgusting.

I believe we should have an answer now. If these stories are mere rumours, then they should be immediately nipped in the bud, and that can be done by the minister stating whether or not this matter has been brought to his attention. If anything along the lines of the information which has come to my attention in the past few days has been sug-