

I believe that the present intention is to take them in that order, but if there was any change, the committee would be told ahead of time. Now, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. PICKERSGILL: There is one point I feel quite certain, Mr. Chairman, is bound to arise. Mr. Fulton's question really is the beginning of the examination, but I would like to raise this question with the committee first to see what the view of the committee is about it.

I am sure as I look around the table there is not a member here who has not written me about individual immigration cases. Now, I had assumed that this committee would not be concerning itself about individual cases unless some point of the principle was involved in a particular case, and that this committee would not be used as a vehicle to get information about particular cases; because I am quite sure that if we attempted to do that, it would be impossible ever to finish the work of the committee and moreover I think it would be rather unfair to the members of parliament who are not members of this committee, and I do not think it would accomplish any useful purpose.

By that I do not mean to say that if there are any cases which any member thinks involve some awkward point of administration or law, or illustrates some place where the department is falling down, that they should not be brought up. But where it is just a question of trying to find out why X, Y or Z is not getting here a little quicker, or was turned down, I think it would be quite impossible to carry on in that way.

I think it would be appropriate to have that point clearly understood now without waiting for it to arise in some particular instance.

Mr. CAMERON: I think everyone agrees to that, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I know that in the Veterans Affairs committee it was well understood that we would not go into individual cases unless it was a matter of establishing some general situation in some way or another. Will you please continue with your answer to Mr. Fulton's question?

Hon. Mr. PICKERSGILL: Yes. And perhaps I should answer the second part of his question first. The Treasury Board, as Mr. Fulton knows, is part of the Privy Council and I presume that the privy councillor's oath applies to it in precisely the same way as it does to the proceedings in the cabinet. Therefore I think it would not be at all proper for me to say anything about what happens at the Treasury Board when the ministers are present and when the estimates are being examined by my colleagues, because that is where the government does, of course, reach its conclusions; and it is the conclusions which come before parliament.

I do not think however there is the slightest objection to describing the way in which the officials of the Treasury Board—before the estimates come to that board—proceed in conjunction with the officials of this or any other department, in the preparation of these estimates. The estimates really are not our estimates at all; they are the estimates of the Minister of Finance. I suppose that is the correct legal position. It is the Minister of Finance who provides the estimates for the expenditures, just as the Minister of Finance also recommends ways and means to meet them.

Mr. FULTON: Mr. Chairman, I would not expect the minister to say what any one of the members of the Treasury Board did or said. But I was hoping we could get from the minister an outline of the process by which the estimates of this department go through the Treasury Board. What is the procedure?