

Supply—Immigration

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): That is not in the nature of a grant; it is an arrangement with the Quebec government whereby we spend dollar for dollar with them on repatriation.

Mr. GARDINER: What was the amount spent last year?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): We spent \$50,000 last year and they spent \$65,000 for the repatriation of people who had left Quebec and gone to the United States.

Mr. GARDINER: Do you get any statement as to the expenditure of this money?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I am informed that the accounts are audited by both auditors general.

Mr. LUCAS: Is there any statement as to the number of people brought back under that vote?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): They numbered 1,837.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I understood the minister to say that this was in the nature of a grant to share the cost of repatriation; is that so?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Yes.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): The government has no control over the manner in which it is to be spent?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): The vote is for repatriation work in the United States, for transportation and assistance to the repatriated persons returning to Canada to settle on the lands, and for directional work and after-care in connection with land settlement.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Is it correct to say that the government pays over to the Quebec government a sum of money for some purpose, over which it has no control and for which it has no further responsibility?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I am informed that all these accounts are checked by our auditor general and that while we have no officers of the federal department engaged in this work, all the men being employed by the Quebec government—

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): In other words it would be fair to say this is a case in which one government collecting taxes from the whole people turns over a portion of those taxes to another government over which it has no control and in connection with which it has no responsibility. It looks to me as though

[Mr. Gardiner.]

it were the vicious principle which has been discussed so often, and if there is any consistency in this government the grant should be stopped.

Mr. SPENCER: Could the minister inform the committee where those who are brought back to Canada are eventually settled?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I am informed that they are all placed on farms in various portions of Quebec, wherever land is available.

Mr. CAMPBELL: I may not be strictly in order on this particular item, but I should like to ask the minister just what is the policy of the department with respect to newly arrived immigrants who have to undergo hospital treatment. I have had many complaints in my constituency of cases where these sick and distressed people have had to undergo hospitalization and it is pretty hard for the hospitals to finance. The contention is that the Department of Immigration should accept some responsibility for immigrants of that kind. Perhaps the minister could tell us the policy of his department.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): It is a very difficult problem and has always appealed to me as a reason why we should not bring in people who are not requested by the provinces. The difficulty of immigration as conducted at present is that there seems to be an idea that all we had to do was to pour people in, particularly in western Canada, and they would be absorbed. Long ago we realized that this was not possible, and as far as I am concerned I think this will be the remedy for a great deal of difficulty which has been experienced in the past with respect to people who through injury or illness become public charges. They are in the province and they are on the hands of the province. It may be and quite frequently is said with some truth that the Department of Immigration has nothing to do with bringing them into the country except to pass them for physical and mental fitness. In no way did the department bring them here, yet they become a public charge and frequently demands are made upon us. We are trying to meet that situation as far as we possibly can, but it is a difficulty which I think will be covered by this agreement.

Item agreed to.

Relief of distressed Canadians outside of Canada—\$4,000.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I should like to revert for a few minutes to item 59, having to do with Chinese immigration, and to ask a question