

Mr. YOUNG: When the Prime Minister gives the statement of which he speaks, will there be an opportunity for the house to debate the matter, or would it be better to allow this item to stand so that we may debate it later?

Mr. BENNETT: I see no reason that an opportunity should not be afforded, while the estimates are under discussion, for any debate that may be desired, and if it is felt that this item will afford a suitable opportunity for that purpose, it may stand.

Item stands.

Canada's portion of expenditure of the Imperial economic committee, the Imperial shipping committee, and the executive council of the Imperial Agricultural Bureaux for 1934, \$18,690.

Mr. BENNETT: Perhaps the committee has some knowledge of the circumstances out of which this arises. When the representatives of the dominions met in London with the representatives of the British government and decided to discontinue the operations of the marketing board, there were certain obligations which the dominions undertook to discharge, one of them being in connection with the Imperial Economic committee, which renders valuable service to the dominion; another with respect to the Imperial Shipping committee, which renders invaluable service to us in connection with insurance rates and matters of the kind of which perhaps hon. gentlemen opposite are as well aware as I am; and another dealing with the agricultural bureaux. I cannot recall the entire amount of the expenditures for 1934, but our contribution was \$18,690.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Are all the dominions contributing a like amount?

Mr. BENNETT: They fix the amounts of their contributions by mutual arrangement. My memory at the moment is this: ours is of course, because of our population, the largest contribution other than that of Great Britain. The Free State, I think, is making some contribution but it is the smallest of all. I do not think there is anything about the matter that calls for a more elaborate statement than what I have indicated as to how it came into being, but if the committee feels it desires further information I shall be glad to see that it is furnished.

Mr. POWER: I suppose we may assume that this will be a more or less continuing item to which we are committed for years to come?

[Mr. Bennett.]

Mr. BENNETT: There is no commitment for any length of time. But the service rendered by the Imperial Shipping committee which is presided over by Sir Halford MacKinder and which has had largely to do with insurance rates is of great importance.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): It is very important.

Mr. BENNETT: I would not say that there is any commitment that extends into years; it is just from year to year.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): What is the nature of the activities of the agricultural bureaux?

Mr. BENNETT: Just as its name indicates, it is for the purpose of supplying information that will—shall I put it in this way—make for an increase in the sale of our commodities, for instance, our wheat as one commodity, its quality and matters of that kind. The bureaux deal with that and collect statistics. I suppose it is known to the committee that for the last twenty-five or thirty years we have been making contributions to what is called the International Institute of Agriculture that meets at Rome. The other is confined to the empire alone, doing somewhat the same service, only perhaps in a little more intensive manner than that given by the institute at Rome.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I was wondering whether this is supplementary. We are not discontinuing the services of the institute at Rome which gives a world service. Is this confined to the empire?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes.

Mr. YOUNG: How many of these bureaux are there? I see it is plural.

Mr. BENNETT: I speak solely from memory now; it will be corrected if I am in error. The question of these bureaux is one that various parliaments and legislatures have had to deal with, as the hon. gentleman knows. For instance there was one agricultural bureau, so-called, that dealt with standards of wool at Leeds; I think the hon. gentleman knows something of that. Another dealt with dairy products. These various bureaux are supposed—I put it so in deference to the hon. gentleman—to collect such information as is of value to the departments of agriculture in various parts of the empire. I think that is the shortest way I can put it.

Item agreed to.