

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

in search of economic advantage or schools for their children. The officials should proceed with the utmost caution so as to ensure that this plan will conform with the needs of the Indian people in the areas where the houses are to be built.

Mr. Barnett: Could the minister give us a little information about this item? As I read it, it is one of those legislative items inasmuch as its purpose, in addition to the provision of money for Indian education, is to extend the purposes of vote 15 of the main estimates in respect of certain payments of social assistance to persons other than Indians residing on Indian reserves, and also to make some provision for the education of non-Indian children in schools on the reserves. Is this part of reciprocal arrangements which are being worked out with the provinces in these fields of social assistance and education?

Mr. Benson: In brief, I can tell the hon. member this. A cabinet decision of January 5, 1966, authorized the Citizenship Branch to make annual grants to the Canadian Association for Adult Education and l'Institut Canadien d'Education des Adultes during the five year period from 1965-66 to 1970-71 in amounts equivalent to the lesser of \$30,000 or one third of each agency's annual expenses exclusive of expenditures incurred for projects already subsidized by a federal agency. An amount of \$10,000 had been included in the main estimates to provide for the annual grants to these organizations as in previous years. Total additional requirements amount to \$40,000.

Mr. Barnett: I did not hear the beginning of the minister's remarks but I understand this item arises out of arrangements with the Canadian Association for Adult Education and the equivalent organization in Quebec. I have one other question and it concerns the \$300,000 item for travel by Indian pupils. Why is this additional sum required? Is this an ancillary vote related to the other item for \$700,000 which has to do with the education and maintenance of Indians? In other words, is it an additional travelling expense necessitated by placing an increasing number of Indian children in schools operated under the public school systems of the provinces or has it to do with additional travel by Indian pupils to and from their regular schools?

Mr. Benson: Perhaps I can read the explanation I have. The Auditor General in his

[Mr. Baldwin.]

report to the House of Commons for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1965, questioned the authority of the branch to make education expenditures on behalf of non-Indians other than on a recoverable basis. Our legal adviser contends that the wording of vote 15, "grants, contributions and special payments, including those specified in the subvote titles in the estimates", authorizes us to make the expenditures. It is his opinion that while the payments in question are not specified in the subvote title in the estimates, the words "including those specified" indicate that the subvote titles are not exclusive and the "Mowat ruling" would be applicable in this instance and the payments would be properly made.

• (5:10 p.m.)

However, in order to obviate the necessity of further comments by the Auditor General it is proposed to change the vote wording and include the words "special payments in respect of the education in Indian schools of children other than Indian children". The reason for including that is simply so that where there is someone else on a reserve, such as an Indian agent, his children may also go to school without a comment from the Auditor General. The amount of money which is required is \$700,000 for the tuition and maintenance of Indians in non-federal schools and \$300,000 for the travel of Indian children to and from schools.

Mr. Barnett: To and from non-federal schools?

Mr. Benson: Yes.

Mr. Cowan: The minister read a very learned legal opinion on this Indian affairs matter and he got the opinion very quickly. Could the Department of Public Works not get a legal opinion from the Supreme Court of Canada that fast with regard to water lots?

Mr. Benson: It was not quite that fast. I have had this in my hand ever since the estimates were first submitted.

Item agreed to.

20e. Construction or acquisition of buildings, works, land and equipment, \$500,000.

Mr. Barnett: Could the minister tell us whether this is in effect an advance appropriation under the program which the Minister of Northern Affairs announced recently with regard to the construction or acquisition of building, works and land? Is this in effect an initial payment in order to get that program under way?