

Supply—Veterans Affairs

strictly with the situation at Windsor, was there any legal claim against the contractor for the several hundred thousand dollars that the department had to expend to repair these houses?

Mr. Gregg: No; a settlement was arrived at. It was felt that there was no legal claim that could be carried through, and it was settled.

Mr. White (Hastings-Peterborough): How much longer does the minister think he will be spending over \$100,000 a year to repair and keep these houses in shape?

Mr. Gregg: I do not want to make any prophecies but I will express the pious hope that it will not be much longer. One reason why I am certain that it will not apply to the main number of the new houses that are being built is the plan that is being adopted. When the veteran builds his own house it is a much better house in reality, and particularly in his opinion, than one that the contractor builds for him.

Mr. Fraser: The minister mentioned the Faircraft houses. Are they all repaired now and settlements made on them?

Mr. Gregg: They will be when this—

Mr. Fraser: There were 35 houses altogether, were there not, or was it more than that?

Mr. Gregg: About 35, as I remember. This is to repair the roofs on a few of them.

Mr. Fraser: I understood that there was to be a settlement. What was the average settlement made on those where the veterans repaired them themselves?

Mr. Gregg: I will get that for my hon. friend. It was worked out satisfactorily.

Mr. Fulton: What is the relationship between these two items, Mr. Chairman, and the write-down of the selling price which was authorized, I think, in 1948-49 and 1949-50 as well? Were these houses in which the price was written down also subject to repair under this vote? If so, what is the total that has been expended to date under the two headings?

Mr. Gregg: These are not related to that. That was a different job by itself. But I may tell my hon. friend that in round figures the total of write-down and remedial work will be, with these two smaller items, in the vicinity of \$3 million.

Mr. Fulton: Has anything been recovered from any of the contractors in respect of those repairs?

Mr. Gregg: Recoveries have been made in some cases by settlement, and there are still some holdbacks on some of the contracts.

[Mr. White (Hastings-Peterborough).]

Mr. Fulton: Has the minister the total of recoveries to date from contractors?

Mr. Gregg: I have not got it today. I shall try to get it for the hon. member.

Item agreed to.

Terminable services—

555. Post discharge rehabilitation benefits including out of work allowances, university and vocational training, including the training of merchant seamen and salt water fishermen pensioners, awaiting returns allowances, temporarily incapacitated allowances and unemployment insurance contributions, \$14,045,500.

Mr. Gregg: Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak briefly on this item, even at the risk of delaying the passage of my estimates. However, this vote from now on will decrease rapidly; before many years it will disappear altogether.

First I wish to express the federal government's appreciation of the cordial and capable co-operation of all provincial governments in the tremendous vocational training effort for veterans during the past six years. This has been a great example of effective teamwork between the two federal departments of Labour and Veterans Affairs, and the appropriate departments within all provincial governments.

Before the effort is over something approaching 100,000 young men and women will have gained special skills through this vocational training. As far as can be observed, so far the results of that training have been effective in bringing the veterans into working skills in every phase of our economic life.

And so within a year of our Canadian history which, I hope, will be marked by wider dominion-provincial co-operation, I point to this effort as a shining proof that it does work.

The other special point I wish to make is related to the other wing of our veteran training program, namely the university training effort. I do not think it is widely realized how great was the task that loomed up before all our Canadian universities in 1945, as demobilization got under way. Within a period of twelve months some had to double or triple their accommodation. But the universities turned the approaching task and the apparently impossible problem into a great opportunity.

The way they entered upon that opportunity is now becoming a matter of history. It is a magnificent period of achievement in the history of all of the universities, and it will enrich their traditions and experience in such a way that it will be reflected down through the years ahead.