

Mr. ST. LAURENT: No. The expenditure to December 31, 1945, was \$2,764.18, and there were accounts which had not then been received, for work previously done.

Mr. JACKMAN: Are these prize courts and the matters with which they concern themselves not somewhat of a relic of the Elizabethan days, and not having much to do with modern progress? I am just wondering whether or not the whole thing is necessary, although it is not that aspect of it to which I wish to direct the minister's attention; but inasmuch as the costs of the court have to be paid by someone, is it not reasonable to make the recommendation that the prize money itself should bear the burden of the legal administration of the court?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: If there were prize money which was coming to the government it would go into the consolidated revenue fund and would not be available for expenditure. The principle of responsible government, as I understand it, is that expenditures, even though they be made for the purpose of creating revenue, have to be voted by parliament; that all the receipts go into the one fund, and whatever is required as expenditure has to be voted by parliament out of that fund.

Mr. JACKMAN: I am glad to accept the minister's explanation of it; but may I at the same time direct his attention to the fact that that principle has been grossly violated in a number of the government operated companies now set up under the Department of Reconstruction?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: At the present time the committee is not considering the financing of crown companies, but the items the Department of Justice requests to have voted under the old system.

Item agreed to.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

348. General administration, \$266,379.

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): Some time ago I tried to have the following question placed on the order paper:

Do the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have files containing information concerning Canadian citizens; and if so, what members of parliament are covered by such dossiers?

The question was rejected on grounds which I believe were adequate, and I have no complaint at all about the rejection. Nevertheless I said then that I would raise this matter when these estimates came up. One of the most vicious practices in Europe before the war, and many years before the war, was the

collection and maintenance of dossiers on private individuals. They were used in a sinister manner; they were used to spy on individuals and to collect—

Mr. SKEY: The hon. member's party lost on that in Ontario; why bother with it now?

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): The hon. member's party won. The dossiers were kept and were exposed. Do not say you lost.

Mr. SKEY: The hon. member's party did.

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): They were used not only in Europe but in some parts of Ontario in a sinister manner to spy on individuals. I do not for a moment deny that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have the right to investigate Canadian citizens whom they may suspect of criminal intent or criminal practices, but I do not believe the mounted police have any right whatsoever to retain such a file on an individual once its purpose has been served. I call to the attention of the minister a section of a proposed charter which was drawn up by a group of private citizens in the United Kingdom before the war. The chairman of this group was Lord Sankey, who was lord chancellor from 1929 to 1935. The section I wish to quote reads as follows:

All administrative registration and records about a man shall be open to his personal and private inspection. There shall be no secret dossiers in any administrative department. All dossiers shall be accessible to the man concerned and subject to correction and verification at his challenge. A dossier is merely a memorandum; it cannot be used as evidence without proper confirmation in open court.

As I said before, I believe that on occasion dossiers are necessary, but I do not think they should be maintained perpetually, containing information about citizens in this country. I should now like to ask the Minister of Justice the question I attempted to place on the order paper. Do the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have files containing information concerning Canadian citizens? That is the first question I wish to ask.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Yes; they have files containing reports of investigations made whenever it appeared in the interests of the public that such investigations should be conducted. The hon. member also asks if there are any dossiers on members of parliament. There are no dossiers on members of parliament as such. There was a dossier that consisted of reports of investigations concerning a man who is now a member of parliament, but investigations that were made at a time when he was not a member of parliament but was a fugitive, during the period of a couple