

Mr. SMITH: No, I would not have the figures here; but in so far as the Immigration branch is concerned, \$30 million is for the whole department. I only have to do with the Immigration branch.

Mr. MICHENER: Take item 59 by way of illustration. I wonder if we could get an idea of where one of those items started out in August and where it finished up when it went into the blue book.

Hon. Mr. PICKERSGILL: I wonder if this is really a very useful line of inquiry? After all, what parliament is asked to consider is what the Minister of Finance has submitted to parliament, and the process by which that is arrived at is, while no doubt very interesting—I wonder if that is what we are really here to do? Are we not here to do this: to see whether we could reduce these estimates still further?

Mr. MICHENER: That is true, but it is interesting to know how far it has been squeezed at this point and I would like to know if the deputy minister has stated that they might vary from department to department—to see if it is squeezed to the last point before it goes to the Treasury Board, and to see if there really was not any reduction after it got to the Treasury Board, or a still further reduction after it got to the Treasury Board.

Hon. Mr. PICKERSGILL: I think I must answer that question myself. There were some reductions made after the estimates were submitted to the officials of the Treasury Board during the discussion of them, just as I think one would expect there would be. And there were some further very slight reductions made in the estimates that were submitted to the board before they were printed in this book, but they were very slight ones. The fact of the matter is that perhaps because the Minister of Finance had been the minister of this department, and because he understood its operations better perhaps than those of most departments, he seemed not to find it too hard to satisfy himself that this department was economically administered, and certainly that has been my experience.

Mr. THATCHER: I know this question is not an easy one, but I would still like to ask it. Has the deputy minister any suggestions himself of where he might squeeze a few more dollars out of these estimates as they now appear?

Mr. FORTIER: We could possibly reduce, for example, some of the staff, providing that Canadian people at the border were willing to wait for an hour and a half or two hours before they were admitted. We have to provide the staffs at the border between the United States and Canada. Suppose we were to reduce those staffs by maybe 30 to 40 per cent, it would be a question whether the Canadian people were willing to wait for one and a half to two hours to get into Canada.

Mr. THATCHER: I am not sure they would not be willing to wait; but can you tell us of any others?

Hon. Mr. PICKERSGILL: There is one other general observation which I could make, and which is more proper for me to make than my deputy minister. It is this: even when the money is voted, there is an opportunity inside the department to see if spending can possibly be avoided. The expenditures may be compared with last year's estimates, and we have found that in many cases the full amount of the vote is not likely to be spent. That, of course, tends to reduce expenditures, and nothing should be spent that does not need to be spent in the year. That has always been my feeling about the spending of public money.

Mr. THATCHER: With respect to this Item 59, it may be that the minister would describe the details and answer Mr. Starr's question as to why the staff has gone up so sharply in the last year as compared to the last five years? Why has the cost of the staff gone up?