

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

Mr. Blackmore: Is there a particular man in the province who does this work?

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): Yes; and more than one in some of the larger provinces.

Mr. Blackmore: By what means would a person in my constituency in southern Alberta be able to get in touch with that man in Edmonton? Is he told who that man is, and is he given his name and more or less made acquainted with him so he would feel certain that his petition would be heard?

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): In many many cases the settlement officer is the one who meets the immigrant and directs him to the place to which he is to go. Of course that does not occur in every case, but the immigrant is informed of the fact that we have these officers, and of their location, though he may possibly forget and misplace the paper at a later time.

Mr. Drew: There is one point I wish to refer to briefly; I am speaking particularly of education for adult immigrants. There can be no doubt about the ordinary educational facilities being available to those of the ordinary education age. It is extremely important that adult immigrants have an opportunity for education which not only gives them the advantage of the two official languages of Canada but also gives them information with regard to our form of democracy and with regard to many things about our country which are of importance. The textbooks that are being supplied by the department in that respect are very good and are being used to great advantage. I believe more could be done through an extension of the co-operation between the department and the departments of education of the provinces than is being done at the moment. On this occasion I am not raising this critically, because we are dealing with a relatively new field. I simply put this forward and leave the thought as something I should like to have considered by the department.

More and more we recognize the advantage of visual instruction. I would hope that a conference between some representative or representatives of the department and representatives of departments of education in the provinces would consider the possibility of arranging for a type of visual education which could be produced by the national film board and would become generally available across the country. Certain films are available now, but these films are not of the type I have in mind. Films which illustrate in a pictorial form certain types of our system of national, provincial and educational government, certain types of our

[Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce).]

own characteristic Canadian way of doing things in different parts of the country, would all be very helpful in connection with these programs.

In offering this suggestion may I pay my personal tribute to some of these voluntary organizations which, along with the organizations set up by the provincial governments, are doing a magnificent job at this time in giving educational training to the immigrants. I do not propose to pick them out, because in some cases they are religious organizations, in some cases they are under particular racial groups, and under various public service activities. But a splendid job is being done which deserves the commendation of hon. members and the people of Canada. I am only suggesting that with the experience already behind us, it would be desirable that we extend the facilities for visual education and assist education in every way we can through the opportunities we now have.

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): I agree that one of the best means of education is the visual method and, as the leader of the opposition has indicated, we have films; but at one time or another there has been some criticism, not criticism of the films we have but merely, as my hon. friend has said, a request for other and perhaps better films. I want to assure him that in the citizenship branch we are doing what we can to provide these, and we shall take under advisement the recommendation he has made.

I do want to join with him in again expressing my thanks to all the organizations which contribute to this work. I have said repeatedly that we could not function in providing the immigrant with an easy means of entry into Canadian life without them. In fact I have gone farther and said that if they did not do it I do not know who would, unless the government did it. But I think it is recognized that it is not desirable that we should provide all the means, because those means are provided by voluntary organizations on the spot, by zealous workers who know local circumstances and who, because of their interest in these people and their interest in the Canadian people as a whole, have volunteered their help. It is a most remarkable work, and I think it is having most remarkable results.

Mr. Fulton: I want to refer briefly to a subject already discussed, not for the purpose of reopening it but simply to indicate that I support the proposal which was placed before the minister. Unfortunately another engagement prevented me from being here when the matter was first raised. I refer to the question of allowing Canadians of East Indian origin to bring into the country their