

54261/276

November 8, 1918.

In re PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN IMMIGRATION
PATROL SERVICE ON THE LAND BOUNDARIES.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY:

It will be recalled that in June, last, the Bureau submitted to the Department a plan, quite elaborate and detailed, for the establishment of a regular immigration patrol on the Mexican boundary, using mounted men, automobiles, motor cycles, etc. The Secretary decided on July 20 that he would not "ask for funds to put this program into effect until the Departments interested demonstrated the need of it more fully than they have thus far done." (See memorandum at pink marker.)

As the enforcement of the Passport-Permit Regulations has proceeded, it has become more and more apparent to the several Departments interested therein (State, War, Navy, Justice, and Labor) that the establishment of a patrol on the border is essential to thorough and efficient enforcement of the law. Indeed, the Secretary of State, the Acting Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Special Assistant to the Attorney General for War Work have all written this Department, urging the establishment of such a patrol. (See letters at green markers.)

The Supervising Inspector of the Immigration Service on the Mexican boundary has, therefore, been asked to submit a new plan and estimate having in view the establishment of a patrol similar to that heretofore suggested, but not so elaborate or expensive, and his communication on the subject is attached hereto.

It will be observed that his estimate shows that the salaries of the force now being used in the enforcement of the Passport-Permit Regulations on the border and the miscellaneous expenses incident thereto, aggregate about \$300,000.00 per annum; and that he estimates for an increase in employees and miscellaneous expenses to bring the equipment up to the minimum that could be expected to produce effective results, at \$400,000.00 per annum, making a total of \$700,000.00. The Bureau has endeavored to estimate from the experience already had the cost of conducting the Passport-Permit work at seaports and in the interior, and has reached the conclusion that this cannot be accomplished for less than \$250,000.00 per annum. The Bureau believes that, for two reasons, the patrol should be established to some extent, that is, at the most vulnerable points, on the Canadian border, and estimates that \$50,000.00 will be the cost of this part of the project. The said two reasons are: (1) That it has been reported that certain classes of very undesirable aliens are constantly drifting across the Canadian boundary without regard to either the immigration law or the Passport-Permit Regulations; and, (2) by making the patrol general on the international land

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boundaries, any appearance of discrimination against a particular country will be avoided. By making use of such part of the force now stationed on the Canadian border as is engaged particularly in the prevention of smuggling for the conduct of this work as well as for their regular duties, it is believed that \$50,000.00 will be found sufficient for that particular part of the work.

The amount allotted to the Department by the President from his war fund for the enforcement of the Passport-Permit Regulations was \$500,000.00, which became available after about three months of the current fiscal year had expired.

The Bureau now recommends that the plan as above outlined be put into operation as rapidly as possible. Of course, doing so will mean the exhaustion of the \$500,000.00 fund long before the current fiscal year expires; but, if the President's Proclamation is to be given real force and effect, the Bureau is satisfied that something of this kind must be done. When it is apparent that the available funds are about to be exhausted, it will be necessary to ask Congress for an urgent deficiency appropriation, and, if the effort to get that meets with failure, to ask the President to allot an additional sum from the general war-work appropriation available to him.

A. A. Munn
Commissioner General.

AWP/WCW.

Approved,
John W. Abernethy,
Acting Secretary.