

*Supply—Public Works*

**Mr. Knowles:** There is one other point. Maybe the minister cannot answer this either. How does he relate the \$25,000 that was voted in 1953-54, this \$420 we are talking about now and the fact that in the 1954-55 estimates there is an item for the Huntingdon public building of \$150,000 which includes a \$25,000 revote. Is it now sufficiently confused?

**Mr. Abbott:** Yes, I think so. I think it must be, I am afraid I cannot answer the question at the moment. As I say, this is to enable the vote which was put in to authorize the expenditure on the new building to be available for the changed situation. I will have to get the details from the Department of Public Works.

**Mr. Green:** The minister suggested there might be some economy, and I was a little startled by that statement.

**Mr. Abbott:** That is right.

**Mr. Green:** I find in the 1954-55 estimates that the amount for this building has gone up from \$25,000 to \$150,000, so there is not very much economy. That includes a revote of \$25,000.

**Mr. Abbott:** These estimates were prepared of course in the early part of the year. Tenders were received on February 10, 1954, the lowest tender being \$116,000, and presumably that is what the extension to the new building will cost, including the additional thousand odd feet of space required by the post office, to provide accommodation for the customs department.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Is it not possible that the \$25,000 included last year was not the full cost of the structure it was intended to build but an appropriation for certain preliminary work?

**Mr. Abbott:** I said it was not.

**Mr. MacInnis:** The \$150,000 will come later.

**Mr. Abbott:** That is exactly what it is. I mentioned a moment ago that the \$25,000 was put in last year as a vote on account of the preliminary estimated cost of \$100,000.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** This is a rather unusual procedure, and I wonder whether the government is contemplating a similar procedure with respect to the proposed new post office and public building in the city of St. Thomas?

**Mr. Abbott:** We would not ordinarily have to do this where the plans are changed. It is in order to meet the strictly technical requirements of the original vote. We could have waited and put in a new vote next year. I suppose we could have paid nothing until next year, but some expenditures have been incurred on plans and advertising which

[Mr. Abbott.]

should properly be charged against last year's vote. That is why the dollar item is in here.

**Mr. Green:** Then the mention in the 1954-55 estimates of a revote of \$25,000 must be wrong. The estimates for the next fiscal year show that it is a revote of \$25,000. That was the full amount of the vote for the present fiscal year. Apparently \$420 has been spent somewhere.

**Mr. Abbott:** I am speaking from recollection of what happened when the matter was brought before treasury board, but as I understand it the vote of \$25,000 was put in the estimates this year for a new building. No new building was planned. No plans were prepared for a new building. Nothing was done about it, but expenditures were incurred for the preparation of plans and the calling of tenders for an extension to the old building. That was done. There are some moneys owed for that. This dollar item will authorize the expenditure out of the \$25,000 voted last year of \$400 odd covering these costs, and that is all it is.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** The minister did not answer my question. I said that this was a rather unusual procedure and I wondered if they were going to adopt the same procedure in the city of St. Thomas where there has been a bit of a controversy about whether they would use the old post office and old public building there or erect a new one on a site that has already been acquired.

**Mr. Abbott:** That would be a policy decision on which I would have no information at the moment.

Item agreed to.

Engineering branch—  
Graving docks—

599. Prince Rupert dry dock and shipyard and appurtenant works—additional amount in excess of the sum of \$110,000 already authorized by vote 343 of the Appropriation Act No. 3, 1953, for the payment of operating losses and essential repairs, all such payments to be made in respect of operations during the calendar year 1953—further amount required, \$103,324.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Together with the \$110,000 authorized earlier, this additional vote will mean a total of \$213,324 for operation and maintenance. Does any revenue accrue to the government from the operation of this graving dock? Has the minister that information before him?

**Mr. Abbott:** I believe there is some revenue but I do not think I have the information here at the moment. The dock is operated by Canadian National Railways. It has been under a management contract from ourselves whereby we pay the deficit. I know the