

Mr. PUGSLEY: At all events it is a departure from the well-recognized rule of parliamentary authority which ought not to be departed from except for very strong reasons. There is no reason in this case. Does my right hon. friend suggest that the shipbuilders would not trust this Parliament and this Government to provide the money from year to year necessary to carry out the contracts? My right hon. friend says that there are greater safeguards thrown around the expenditure of this money than are thrown around the expenditures for instance of the Department of Public Works. That is entirely wrong, because under the law the Minister of Public Works is prohibited from carrying on any public work exceeding \$5,000 in cost without first publicly calling for tenders. When the tenders are received, they have to be submitted to the Governor in Council, and he must award the contract to the lowest tenderer unless for special reasons which have to be set forth in an Order in Council. That is the safeguard with respect to the expenditure of money for public works. My right hon. friend has said that he proposes to improve this Bill by having a statement laid before Parliament. That is a very slight safeguard, but it is a little improvement. I hoped that my right hon. friend would have gone further and provided that these vessels shall be built only after public tenders have been called for; and that the same law, which applies to the undertaking of public works and the carrying out of public contracts, shall be applicable to these war vessels. This Bill on the contrary proposes to give to the Governor in Council a power which has never been given in the past, to expend this enormous amount of money over a period of three or four years, and to let the contracts for these vessels without calling for public tenders. Under this Bill my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries could go to England, let a private contract and absolutely ignore all those provisions which provide for the letting of ordinary contracts for public works. I hope that, before this Bill is disposed of, my right hon. friend will consider the question as to whether or not the law relating to the calling of tenders for public works should be made applicable to the expenditure of money under it.

Mr. GUTHRIE: In reply to the statement made by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister in regard to the Ottawa Improvement Commission, if he will turn to page 94 of the estimates he will find that \$115,000 is placed there for it, which is an annual expenditure. It is authorized by statute, but we can criticize it this year, next year, or any year. It is quite

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distinct from the proposal of the Government to spend \$35,000,000.

Mr. BORDEN: If no estimates at all were passed this year the sum would be available to the Ottawa Improvement Commission just as the judges' salaries would be available to them under the statute. Surely my hon. friend is aware of that. If not, the slightest consideration of it will convince him that I am entirely right. If he will look at page 32 of the estimates, he will see all the salaries of the judges set out. Does he mean that, if we did not pass these estimates, the judges would not be paid their salaries?

Mr. GUTHRIE: My point is that they should be put in the estimates each year and so should this vote, in order that we can criticise them.

Mr. BORDEN: My hon. friend with his experience must realize that these sums are included in the printed document which I have before me for the purpose of informing the public and members of Parliament in particular of the total annual expenditure of the country.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Proposed.

Mr. BORDEN: It does not at all follow—it is hardly necessary to urge this upon a member of the legal profession—that sums that are provided for by statute would not be paid even although no estimates were passed. The estimate itself is founded upon a statute. That statute when passed authorizes the expenditure of the money. A statute that provides for these expenses in perpetuity would still be observed even if no estimates were passed in any one year.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Why not treat the naval vote just as you are treating the amounts that you have here? Why not put it in the estimates and let us have an opportunity of criticising it?

Mr. BORDEN: I am treating it in the same way as the amounts for the Ottawa Improvement Commission have been treated, in the same way as the amounts for the Royal Mint, and the Associated Press, and the grant for agriculture have been treated. My hon. friend the Postmaster General reminds me that it is in the same way that the Pacific cable has been dealt with, namely, by a statute providing for payments in the first instance and not depending upon passing the estimates from year to year. Further than that, I would like to inform hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House that when an amendment was moved by them, which adopted the second clause of this Bill—which we seem to be still dis-