

man who has just addressed the committee I would point out that he has apparently overlooked one clause of that act which says that when the officers of the Public Works department certify that in their opinion the works can be executed more expeditiously and economically by days' work than by calling for tenders, it may be done in that way. Obviously there are certain works for which it is very difficult to prepare specifications and call for tenders in advance, and it is only in cases of that kind that works exceeding \$5,000 are done by days' work, or possibly in some cases under the Unemployment Relief Act where it was possible to give a larger measure of employment by doing the work by day labour rather than by contract. Of course when a contract is awarded the contractor decides who shall be employed, and although in some cases the works done by days' work did exceed \$5,000 the work was done in that way in places where there was considerable unemployment and where it was possible to rotate men who were in need of work. I can assure my hon. friend that the spirit and intention of the Public Works Act has been respected, and whenever it has been departed from it was either for the reason that the work could not be done expeditiously and economically by contract, or because the circumstances were such that there was special need for relieving unemployment.

Mr. DUFF: I cannot agree with the Minister of Public Works, because I know of cases where the work would have been done much more expeditiously and economically if tenders had been called for, and not only that, but more men would have been employed had the work been given out by contract. The minister could very well have inserted in the contract, if he was afraid that the contractor would not give work to certain people, that the work should be divided among the people in the community who were in need of work. It is all very well for the minister to try to put this on the shoulders of his officials and say that they advised him that these works could be done more expeditiously by days' labour than by contract, but I know differently, and I say that he cannot blame the officials of his department. These amounts were spent and the advice was given to the officials and they were told what to do by the minister in the head office here at Ottawa. All I say to the Prime Minister is that if any moneys are to be spent under this Relief Act for public works, tenders should be called for instead of the work being done as it has been done in the past by the Minister of Public Works.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): My hon. friend has said either too much or too little. I ask him to give me now the work that he refers to which he says was done in this irregular way, and I will investigate. I assure him that no instructions were given by me in any way in conflict with the Public Works Act.

Mr. DUFF: I quite agree with the minister that no instructions were given by him in conflict with the Public Works Act, but you can drive a horse and cart through that act if you want to; you can read it seventeen different ways, and that is the way lawyers draft bills. I say to the minister that I know of different cases but I am not going to give him the information. Let him go down and examine the files. I know of one instance where they had two foremen, one at \$7 per day and one at \$6.

Mr. BENNETT: Where was that?

Mr. DUFF: Let the minister go down and examine the files. There is another case where he paid 15 cents per foot for logs and 6 cents for poles.

Mr. BENNETT: Where was that?

Mr. DUFF: I ask the minister to find out where it was.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Say where it was.

Mr. DUFF: The minister knows where it was.

Mr. CANTLEY: You are making the charge; why do you not substantiate it?

Mr. DUFF: When the public accounts committee meets I will make the charges. Let the minister produce the files then; that is the time to do it, not now.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): This is the second time my hon. friend has made this statement. On the previous occasion I pressed him just as hard as I could, and I do so now, to tell me the place where this work was carried on. Will he tell me the constituency in which it was carried on?

Mr. DUFF: When the public accounts committee meets I shall be delighted to produce the information. All I am doing now is to ask the Prime Minister not to repeat in this bill what happened two years ago when money was passed over to the Minister of Public Works to do certain repairs and to construct certain works in Nova Scotia.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): Will my hon. friend give me the name of the foreman?