

Supply—Public Works

Item No. 676 is for a building in Port Union, item 683 is for a building in Regina, and item 684 is for a building in Edson. I think the policy the minister adopted when he assumed office is the right one. Let us not have an appropriation if we are not going forward with the building and if \$1 is shown one year let us make sure the actual amount of the appropriation appears the following year if the building is not started.

As an illustration I want to mention the building I have in mind. Under the minister's predecessor a vote of \$1 was shown for a public building in Claresholm. The minister at that time was elevated to another position and the present minister took over. When he assumed office his estimates came down and nothing appeared for the public building.

I kept hammering and hammering every year on the subject and now I want to thank the minister because this year they are going forward with that particular project. The money has been voted for it and the people are now satisfied. The point is, however, that the vote of \$1 gave approval to this project before the present minister took office and yet the construction of the building did not take place until this year.

I prefer the policy the present minister is following. It looks to me at the moment as though he is reverting to the previous policy which I do not think is a good one.

If I am wrong in my understanding of this \$1 item I wish the minister or his assistant would tell me so because I notice item 684 is an Alberta item and I do not want the people of Edson to be discouraged if they are not going forward with the building.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Chairman, the \$1 means that we have to put this item in the estimates if we want to carry on with the work. That is the reason we put just the \$1 in the estimates and the remainder of the cost will be provided from excess funds in other projects in the province.

Mr. Hansell: Is the building being constructed this year?

Mr. Bourget: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Item agreed to.

681. Ontario (other than Ottawa), \$250,000.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Mr. Chairman, there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction concerning the demolition of the building at the corner of Fleet and Harbour streets in Toronto. I wonder if the parliamentary assistant could tell us how soon we can expect that work to be cleared up and all the debris removed and what particularly was the reason that it stayed the way it did for so long?

[Mr. Hansell.]

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Chairman, I am told now that the demolition is taking place and we expect that work will be completed very soon.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Can the parliamentary assistant tell me what "very soon" means in this case?

Mr. Nowlan: As soon as possible.

Mr. Bourget: I am informed that it will be finished next week.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Well, that is the best answer we have had in a long time.

Item agreed to.

General—

700. To provide for the restoration of the special account in the consolidated revenue fund established by section 36 of the National Housing Act, 1954, by the amount paid out of the special account during the fiscal year 1955-56 in respect of:

- (a) Losses sustained as a result of the operation of federal-provincial rental projects—federal share, \$34,097.
- (b) Preliminary expenses incurred under enabling agreements with provincial governments, \$128, \$34,225.

Mr. Green: Mr. Chairman,—

Mr. Hamilton (York West): The last word.

Mr. Green:—this vote apparently has to do with the projects under section 36 of the National Housing Act which I understand is the section under which the dominion and the provinces and the municipalities can co-operate.

Earlier in the session we had some discussion about the government being unwilling to go into a project of this kind for the use of old age pensioners exclusively. The Minister of Public Works told us on two or three occasions during the session that he would not be a party to a project of that kind even though the municipality and the province had asked for a project which would be exclusively for recipients of old age security.

Has there been any change in that policy either to provide that the project can be exclusively for senior citizens or in the alternative to permit of a larger percentage of senior citizens being accommodated in such a project?

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Chairman, as my hon. friend knows, the hon. member for Vancouver East asked some questions on orders of the day some time ago and the minister at that time made a statement to the effect that the municipality cannot constitute itself as a limited dividend corporation. The project that is now being brought forward by my hon. friend could come under a limited dividend