

Supply—Public Works

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I am going to give you all that and a lot more. I have all the information in the books here, and I will give it to you. You will see that it is not so many millions for the building we are putting up there. But on the other hand, Mr. Chairman, may I ask if we should go into these details. They are most interesting, and this general discussion has lasted quite a long time.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): I will not prolong the discussion for more than a minute. I just want to ask one question. But before I do so I want to make a comment because I was greatly interested in hearing the minister this afternoon refer to his good intentions. So far as I can make out, when we see these things in the estimates, they really express good intentions and not much more. May I remind the minister of the remark once made by a gifted colleague of mine, the late Arthur Smith, who said that the road to Hull was paved with good intentions.

I come back to what I asked the minister last night about the duplication of technical services, particularly architects. The minister last night gave me some instruction which I have since been following up. I realize, for example, why there are architects now in the Department of Justice because I have looked up the Penitentiary Act and I see that the Department of Justice have control of penitentiaries and so on. What I want to ask the minister is this. Let us take, for example, Kingston, where there is a penitentiary; I have often walked past it but so far have always escaped. I presume that the minister will have representatives in Kingston either continuously or from time to time; and no doubt the Minister of Justice will also have representatives there from time to time. What I want to know is this. Is there any liaison between them? Do they know each other? Have they offices there that they would use or are they in splendid isolation? Does the man from the Department of Justice go down and carry on his business and does the man from the Department of Public Works go down and carry on his business? Do we have the pleasure of having these men going to and coming from Kingston and each working separately?

Although this is a difficult question to ask the minister to answer because we cannot alter the legislation even if we spend until six o'clock tonight on the matter, I should like to ask the minister whether he feels like expressing an opinion as to whether he thinks it is good common sense. He cannot answer that last question directly, but the minister has ways of answering questions

by what I will call indirection which I always find interesting and which often are extremely illuminating.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Speaking of common sense, Mr. Chairman, may I say that at times I think I have plenty of it and at other times I think I lack it. I should not like to discuss this afternoon the whole field of legislation concerning buildings, construction and acquisition of property; because in each case the bill comes before the house, if it contains any clause relating to the acquisition of property. You can look over many statutes, as hon. members know, in which the department, the crown company or the commission set up have powers and functions determined in that statute.

If you speak of the Department of Justice, and penitentiaries, I may say I think it is a good thing that they should have some architects and somebody trained in the building field because they have special buildings for special needs, and probably as the years go on these architects become experts in this construction. The same would apply to hospitals for the Department of National Health and Welfare. The same thing would apply to airfields in the Department of Transport. I think the same thing should apply to the Department of National Defence where they have operational buildings which are not the ordinary buildings. I do not see so much of that duplication that was reported some years ago.

As to their knowing each other, may I say that I know that architects generally know each other even though they do not work in the same department. That statement applies to lawyers generally; they know each other. They co-operate together and are helpful to each other.

As to giving instructions to officials of my department to intervene in the business of another department, may I say that I would hesitate to do that. I am not saying that the system is perfect. But neither would I say that it lacks common sense or wisdom. When these statutes are brought before parliament, everybody has a go at them and gives his opinion. When parliament has decided, year after year, that this clause concerning construction and buildings should be in the statutes, a great many people have given study to it; and nobody as yet has made or asked for an amendment to these different statutes.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, there are one or two questions I should like to ask with regard to the general policy as to construction of buildings and the like. They arise out of the record made in the province of Saskatchewan by the Lunam Construction