

Supply—Public Works

early planning stages when we were in office; and I would be extremely interested to hear of any project which this government initiated from the very start.

Mr. Green: You might have had schemes in the early planning stage, but that is a long, long way from having any men put to work on them.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is certainly changing the ground.

Mr. Green: There have been 31 new projects in Newfoundland this year. Twenty-five have already started and the remainder will be started very shortly.

The question of St. John's harbour has given me great concern, because I received representations from Sir Leonard Outerbridge, the former lieutenant governor of Newfoundland and a man of very high reputation, and from Sir Brian Dunfield. These two prominent Newfoundland people have opposed this scheme not only on small grounds—the new pier may have been one feature to which they objected—but they took very strong exception to other features of the plan. Sir Leonard at least wanted a completely new survey and an entirely new plan. Because of my respect for this gentleman, and wishing to do a thorough job in connection with this famous harbour, I sent the plan back to my officials time after time. We would probably have been at work on it now had that not been done. Not only my own officials but those of the Department of Transport and the navy and indeed everyone interested in this harbour has supported the recommendations made by the engineering firm, the Foundation Company of Canada Limited.

Like the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, I am not an expert on this matter. I do not even own a rowboat, so I am not an expert on shipping. I do not quite understand how this ex-Manitoban from Ottawa suddenly gets to be a shipping magnate down in Newfoundland.

Mr. Pickersgill: I suggest that the minister come down there sometime and see.

Mr. Green: I am glad he is learning to like the smell of salt water, anyway. Faced with that situation and with urgent demands from the mayor of St. John's, the board of trade, the general public and the newspapers—and certainly with no objection from the Newfoundland government, which is evidently trying to be neutral in this question—

Mr. Pickersgill: So am I.

Mr. Green: We finally decided a start had to be made. The engineers have been engaged to draw up plans, and we are hoping tenders

will be called later in the present year. We will do our very best to see that this job is well done. I am sorry it has not been possible for the people of St. John's to reach agreement as to the type of development they wish. From my information an overwhelming majority of them favour the plan which was submitted to the former government by the Foundation Company of Canada Limited. This is just one of those situations in which we had to do the best we could.

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the minister permit a question at this point? I read again only yesterday the correspondence that appeared in the *Daily News*, of which many hon. members have received copies; and as far as I could discern from reading it—and I could easily be wrong about this—there were only two points of difference. Nobody questions the desirability of the whole development of the south side as proposed in the plan. Nobody questions the desirability of having a roadway across the north side of the harbour to remove the congestion from Water street.

The Chairman: Order. I feel I must draw the attention of the committee to the fact that as I understand it the purpose of this debate on the first item of the department is to discuss the activities of this department in general terms, and that the debate on particular matters should come later when individual items are discussed. For the last half hour or so this discussion has been concentrated mostly on the subject of the St. John's harbour. I consequently believe that the debate should get back to more general terms.

Mr. Green: I believe the suggestion made by the chairman is a very wise one. There is an item in the estimates for this, and when we reach it I will be glad to deal with the hon. member's questions.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am quite willing to comply with the minister's suggestion. It would have taken me less time to make the only point I had to make, sir, than it took the Chairman.

Mr. Fisher: I do not like to rise twice in the general discussion, but my inability to express myself properly this morning led the minister to misunderstand my question in relation to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. I was using the word "moratorium" in the general sense that it is used in war payments and that sort of thing. In reply he suggested that it was impossible for the federal government to do anything about stopping or postponing foreclosures on mortgage loans which were held by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. He suggested this was a matter for the provinces.