

the highest amount provided for harbours and rivers generally in the province of Quebec was \$100,000. When objections were raised to this item the minister suggested that he was only following a principle which had been followed for some time. The increase from \$100,000 to \$400,000 in this item is out of all proportion to the necessities of the present time. That the whole amount plus \$7,000 was spent last year indicates the danger in following a course of this kind. It brings about a condition similar to that which occurred under the blanket powers given to the government by the unemployment relief measures. The minister will recall that in objecting to the granting of those powers, I called his attention to the fact that the expenditures in the province of Ontario had been seven times as much in the ridings represented by government supporters as they had been in the ridings represented by opposition members. Such a principle is absolutely wrong. I think the minister and the government have been ill-advised in increasing this item to the amount that now appears in the estimates. It is bad business, and particularly in times like these when the budget presented to the house shows the lamentable condition of the finances of this country. The minister and other members of the government know perfectly well that if this \$400,000 had not been in the estimates, no such amount would have been expended. In cases of dire necessity the government can issue a governor general's warrant to cover the cost of repairing and restoring buildings destroyed by fire or wharves washed away by storms. The minister would be better advised to limit himself to what is reasonable rather than to increase the amount by four times. Estimates for public works are in a different category from estimates for other purposes. Representatives of various constituencies are anxious to have works constructed in their own districts and there is a tendency to give way to what is really political patronage when the money is available and the members who sit behind the minister know that it is available. I thoroughly agree with the hon. member for Quebec South (Mr. Power) when he says that this item should be reduced by at least \$200,000. There is no justification in a time like this for such a large increase in the amount of money made available for expenditure on matters of this kind.

Sir EUGENE FISET: Mr. Chairman, I do not see why the former Minister of Public Works (Mr. Elliott) should ask that this Quebec item be reduced by \$200,000. I do not agree with him, and I congratulate the minister for providing a sufficient vote to help whatever community may need help in days

[Mr. Elliott.]

like these. I thank him in the name of my constituents for providing a vote of \$47,000 for the city of Rimouski. I would suggest to him that the patronage system might be eased up to a certain extent. I would not ask that a fifty-fifty basis apply, but I do suggest that in considering the needs of our local population at least one-third of the works should go to Liberals of Rimouski.

Mr. HOWARD: I should like to say a few words to correct an impression which may have been left with the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Stewart) by a speech delivered just before six o'clock by the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Tetreault). I think that speech was entirely out of order, but I think also that it is only right that I should correct any wrong impression which may have been left. Reference was made to the construction of a post office at Waterloo, Quebec, in the eastern townships in the county of Shefford. The statement was made that I had recommended the architect, Mr. J. O. Gregoire, for this work. I did not know that I had, but I hope I did because I would tell the minister that he is a mighty good architect. There are three good architects in Sherbrooke and I am glad that this particular work went to the eastern townships instead of somewhere else. I am sure any one of these architects could have done justice to the work. The hon member criticized the fact that the superintendent of works, Mr. Oscar Seguin, had been working in the government liquor store. I might say that this gentleman came very near to getting the nomination at the last election and being the choice of the people of that constituency. I think that is a fairly good recommendation. He also criticized Mr. Robert Bachand, N.P. This gentleman has since been elected to represent this constituency in the provincial house. That is not such a bad recommendation. As to the suggestions made in connection with Mr. P. E. Boivin, I think that gentleman is well known to the committee and can stand upon his own recommendation. I have no complaint to make of the fact that no items appear in the estimates for the city of Sherbrooke. I appreciate the present financial stress which has forced the minister to take the action he has.

Mr. CASGRAIN: I should like to be in a similar position to the hon. member for Rimouski (Sir Eugene Fiset) and congratulate the minister upon finding items in the estimates to take care of the recommendations which have been made as far back as five years ago for the construction of certain public works in my constituency, but I am not. Many necessary public works have been recommended