

Supply—Public Works

Mr. Fleming: Is the minister inviting the hon. member for Greenwood to make the same speech in connection with every department?

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Not while I am leader of the house. But I am trying to give an explanation which is the real explanation. In that other place there was a committee which said that public works should have all these works done. That is a noble sentiment. I am flattered that they have such great confidence in the public works department, but do not ask me to be responsible for all these amendments to all these acts giving jurisdiction and power to other departments. This is one place where you cannot say that the Minister of Public Works is of a grasping nature. Let somebody else do some work.

In many instances they are justified. I can mention one department in which they have only a few architects, namely in connection with the construction of hospitals. If they did not have two or three experts in those matters we would have to increase our own staff and have those experts. There is therefore some justification for the system. You cannot say that the system is absolutely wrong. Although I would appreciate having all the works under my department, and would perhaps feel more important than I do right now, I am just trying to discuss the department and the act under which we operate. I think that up until now we have done our best. I do not know whether or not it is good enough for the opposition, but it is the best we can do.

(Translation):

Mr. Brisson: Mr. Chairman, never in all its history has the county of Saguenay received such readily understood or such well deserved attention. Since 1949—and I include here the moneys provided in the current estimates—the Department of Public Works will have built or rebuilt in the county of Saguenay, 16 wharves, that is those at Tadoussac, les Bergeronnes, Les Escoumains, Sault au Mouton, Forestville, Colombier, Ragueneau, Baie Comeau, Seven Islands, Havre St. Pierre, Natashquan, Tabatière, St. Augustin and Blanc Sablon.

If I add to that the sums that have been spent since 1949 and which will be spent during the next fiscal year, on dredging

operations and construction of retaining walls, plus those that the architect's division has earmarked for the construction of new post office and unemployment insurance buildings, and which it will spend for these purposes, you will realize that I am right in saying that the constituency of Saguenay has received from the Department of Public Works well deserved attention.

Such being the facts, I feel it to be my duty, on behalf of my constituents, to thank the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier) for his loyal co-operation.

I wish to thank the minister, but he will understand that in doing so I cherish the hope of getting again millions of dollars worth of public works for Saguenay county. The sea is the principal means of transportation by which the people of the county get their supplies and ship their raw materials.

May I draw your attention to the case of Shelter Bay? It seems to me that with the co-operation of the Quebec North Shore Company, the provincial government and the federal public works department, it should be possible to build a wharf suited to the needs of these people.

I do not need to mention here all the other projects that will have to be carried out in the future in Saguenay county, since I have already had the opportunity of making them known to the minister. I am confident that he will give them his kindest consideration.

(Text):

The Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Mr. McLure: No. I want to say something, but it is ten o'clock. I would ask that you report progress.

Item stands.

Progress reported.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Tomorrow we shall move to go into supply, call two departments—national defence and national health and welfare—then proceed with public works and then with citizenship and immigration.

At ten o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.