

Supply—Public Works

I am sure the minister must have had that experience himself when he was over here, and I just wanted to confide in him that even a minister of the crown has the same experience. However, with this new regime where there are going to be no secrets and everything is going to be out in the open I think it would be wonderful if the minister would tell us, once and for all—and would get the Postmaster General to agree with him before he says it—which department it is that really does decide. I am making this plea primarily for the benefit of the 150 members opposite who will not get much chance to speak on the estimates and who are just as much interested as we are in these matters. I know that they would like to know to which department they ought to go, whether it is the Post Office Department or Public Works.

The fact of the matter is that, it has been a regrettable experience that whichever department it is has never been able to appreciate how rapidly Newfoundland is growing. Again, I say this may be slightly in criticism of the administration to which I belonged, but it is true that practically every public building that has been built in Newfoundland is already too small. The building at Stephenville—I believe the hon. member for Humber-St. George's will confirm this—was too small before it was opened. The building at Deer lake, which was opened only two years ago, is going to have an addition to it already, according to the estimate. We are glad to have Newfoundland growing. We hope it is going to continue to grow, even under the adversity of a Tory government.

Mr. Green: That is why it is growing.

Mr. Pickersgill: One of the best expressions the minister can give of his confidence in his own government, and in the results of his administration, would be to see that these buildings are 25 per cent to 30 per cent bigger than those which the post office requests. If the minister will do that, and if he will build buildings at Hare Bay and Gambo, and at one or two other places I will mention on another occasion, I am sure that he will make a lot of people in Newfoundland happy and a lot of people think better of his administration.

Mr. Green: I was rather surprised that the hon. member raised this question of the size of buildings because I understood that my predecessor thought the building at Bonavista was too large.

Mr. Pickersgill: Does the minister take that view? I saw that building in Bonavista this week, and I can assure the minister that all the rooms in the building seemed to be

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

fully occupied. When the mail comes in three times a week, the waiting room is pretty well filled, too. The building is actually a credit to the people of Canada and a fine symbol of the advantages of confederation.

Mr. Green: I hope they did not all turn out just to meet the hon. member?

Mr. Pickersgill: I am glad the minister mentioned that point, because a large number of them did turn out, I regret to say, to ask the hon. member if he could find them a job. If the minister could only get ahead with his dredging and his work on the piers at Bonavista some of these people would have jobs and would not have to be asking for one.

Mr. Green: The hon. member will be glad to hear that we are going to build a post office at Badger's Quay this year.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am delighted.

Mr. Green: In so far as the responsibility for determining the size of these government buildings is concerned, that must be a matter of co-operation between the departments. While we do build many buildings for the Post Office Department, we build an increasing number of buildings in which other departments of government are housed. I am afraid the position must continue that this is a matter of co-operation between the different departments.

Mr. Pickersgill: There is one other question I should like to ask, and that is all I have to say on this item. Can the minister give us some estimate as to when it is expected the customs and post office buildings respectively will be completed in St. John's?

Mr. Monteith (Perth): There is more than Newfoundland in this country.

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, but they did not elect anybody to speak for them.

Mr. Green: The answer to the last question asked by the hon. member is that we expect these buildings to be completed in mid-1959.

Mr. Carter: Would the minister say if the amount of space provided in the building now proposed for Marystown is the same as was requested or equal to what was requested by the Post Office Department?

Mr. Green: The area is 20 per cent greater.

Mr. Carter: It is 20 per cent greater than what?

Mr. Green: It is 20 per cent greater than that agreed upon by the post office.