

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: My hon. friend knows very well that all that this country is liable for is the difference between the net earnings of that system and what may be necessary to pay the interest on its funded debt, which difference has never yet exceeded \$15,000,000.

Mr. MACDONALD: My hon. friend, in the first place, forgets that, in regard to that obligation, we have to pay the interest upon the bonded indebtedness. Then there is bank indebtedness which is in the vicinity of \$100,000,000. Then there are the equipment bonds and there is other current indebtedness, all of which I put in detail upon Hansard some two weeks ago. In addition to that, if my hon. friend will take the capital expenditure which has been voted this year, he will find that to-day the bonded indebtedness and the current indebtedness of this country, upon which indebtedness we have to pay interest, is in the vicinity of \$2,250,000,000.

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: No.

Mr. MACDONALD: I will ask my hon. friend to read my statement. I will later on give him the page of Hansard on which I made the computation. I say that is so. If we have to raise \$140,000,000 or \$150,000,000 in this country every year before we can spend a dollar for carrying on the ordinary affairs of the country, while I know this is a splendid public work and while I have nothing to say as to the arguments put forward by the representatives from St. John on its behalf, the time has come in this country when we must cease expending on building breakwaters or other public works of that description, money which is obtained from the people under the guise of war expenditure. Any one who looks these things squ rely in the face knows that next year the Minister of Finance of the day will have to bring down an Income Tax Bill so as to include incomes of \$500, and every one knows we shall have to resort to a land tax in order to raise sufficient money to meet all our needs. If that be so, why should we listen to the eloquent member for St. John who tells a beautiful story about the conditions at that port? Other hon. gentlemen representing other constituencies could, although perhaps not as eloquently as my hon. friend from St. John, tell a story that would appeal very strongly to the sympathies of us all. But at the same time, if it be the case that you have to keep on taxing the people almost beyond bearing in order to get this money, it is

time we stopped building breakwaters and such things. If what I have stated is the exact financial condition of the country—and it is so—then we have no business to vote money for such purposes as this.

Mr. NESBITT: I understand from the minister that he has in the main estimates an appropriation of \$100,000 for this work.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Not this year.

Mr. HAZEN: Not this year.

Mr. NESBITT: I understood the minister to say so.

Mr. HAZEN: I said we had kept that amount in the estimates for some years. It is not in this year's main estimates.

Mr. NESBITT: I was going to suggest that, on account of the lateness of the season, \$100,000 would perhaps be more than could legitimately be expended on the work this year. Even, although that amount is not in the main estimate, I still think what my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) has said, is correct, namely, that we keep on voting every few days some large amounts of this kind towards the construction of public works that could possibly be done without during the war. These items are like drops of water—each one unimportant, but all combined making a great total. We have already this year reached a very large figure as the total expenditure for public works, some of which could very well have been done without.

It is not necessary that the items should be mentioned again, because we spoke of some of them at the time they went through. I agree with my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) that this is a public work in favour of which, perhaps, much could be said. The minister told us that agitation had been carried on against it for about twenty years, but that the agitation had been given up. I imagine it was given up because people had become tired. If you constantly propose doing a thing for a certain number of years, everybody gets tired of objecting. However, that may be, when you consider that work had been contemplated for twenty years and it was not found necessary to undertake it, I think it could go for a while longer. The probabilities are that the storms mentioned by the minister will not occur again. In any event very little of this money can be utilized this year. It is getting late in the season now, and the nights are becoming cold. I think the minister might very well drop this item until another year.