

Supply—Public Works

● (4:20 p.m.)

If estimates serve any purpose they serve the purpose of allowing the individual member to obtain a reasonable answer in regard to a problem he raises, particularly when the problem is directly related to his riding. For this reason I am of the opinion that an answer must be given before this item is passed. I think I speak for four of five members in my party who are also convinced that the Navigable Waters Protection Act is not being complied with in this case. The law is not being observed and people who are complaining about these things are not receiving adequate consideration. Until there is some indication why action has not been taken in this regard, this item will not be passed.

I suggest to the minister that he ask for the withdrawal of this item of the estimates of the Department of Public Works and that we go on with the other items. We intend to wait until a decision is reached with regard to this matter. If a decision is not made I am prepared to help to hold up also all the other estimates, and I do not think this would be in our interest.

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, I am endeavouring to obtain additional information on this question. I am not the Minister of Public Works and am not personally informed on this matter. Might I suggest to the committee that we stand this particular item? I have sent an inquiry concerning it to the Minister of Public Works. I would suggest that we proceed with other items and return to this one later.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Chairman, I am quite prepared to stand this item after I have made some comments with regard to the illegal fill in lake Ontario. I regret that I was not able to complete my remarks on Friday afternoon. The facts that I gave the House of Commons last Friday are easily verifiable, and they are facts. I now come to the realm of plans and purposes in the Toronto area, which are unbelievable and unable to be grasped in a mental picture. If I ask a question of the Minister of the Minister of Public Works, who is not here now, he says, of course the Department of Public Works is seized of the facts. He immediately says, oh yes, he knows all about it and is giving the matter immediate consideration. But I wonder whether the federal government or the Minister of Public Works know what metropolitan Toronto is planning in this regard. They are planning to

[Mr. Peters.]

build a four-lane highway about 700 yards out in lake Ontario running from Scarborough clear over to Etobicoke Creek, a distance of about 20 miles. This is a plan that has been talked about in the Toronto papers and at public meetings for months and months and months.

I have in my hand a copy of the New Toronto *Advertiser* of recent date. It carries a heading that can be seen throughout the house. Right across the top is the heading "Waterfront Plan Rapped. Rats-Stench and Dead Fish". This paper is published in the riding of York West and circulates in York-Humber. It contains comments by various people along the Mimico shore with regard to the plans of metropolitan Toronto to build a highway out in lake Ontario a couple of hundred feet off the shore. The people are arguing: If they build a highway out in lake Ontario a couple of hundred feet in front of our landlots, we will have rats and the stench from dead fish caught in that channel. A meeting was held in New Toronto just a few weeks ago at which the people asked that the highway be built farther out in the lake.

In the name of heaven, does the Department of Public Works never consider what can or cannot be done under the Navigable Waters Protection Act? I took the matter up with a very highly placed official in metropolitan Toronto. I said to this engineering man—and I am prepared to call him a genius—"Have you ever had these plans for a highway out in the lake, off the shore from Etobicoke, Mimico, New Toronto and Long Branch, approved by the Department of Public Works?" He said, "Oh, we cannot submit the idea to the Department of Public Works until we have a plan to show them." They are spending tens of thousands of dollars on engineering details and plans to build a highway in Lake Ontario off the shore of metropolitan Toronto; yet nobody in the Department of Public Works is consulted and nobody in that department asks what the plans are.

The Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys—I am very sorry he is not in his place—has made a number of speeches and I applaud him for so doing. He has said they are going to take every possible action against pollution. Oh yes, we are against pollution; we have to keep the water clear; we have to keep the water clean; we cannot stand for pollution. But does the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys know that in Toronto they are talking about building a